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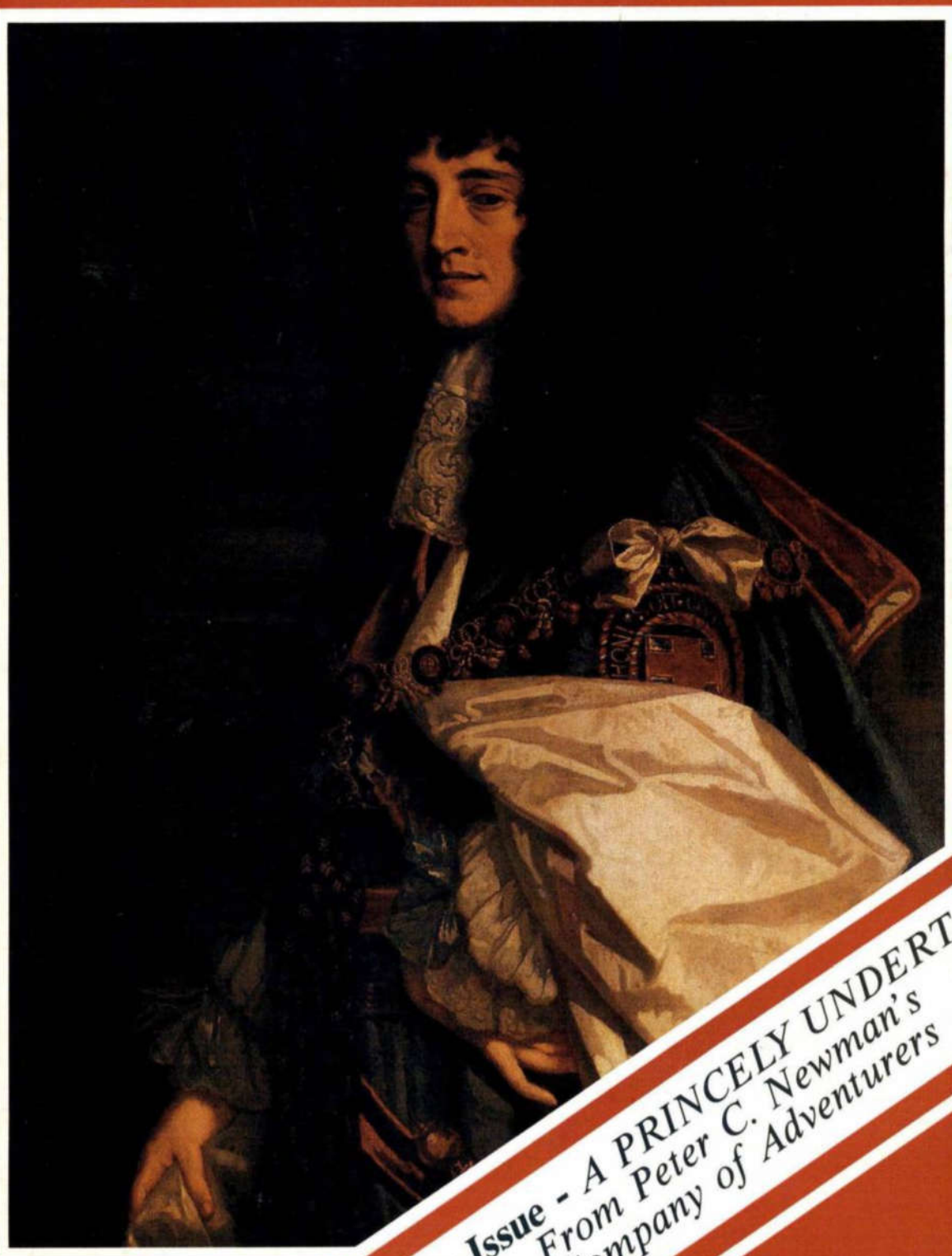
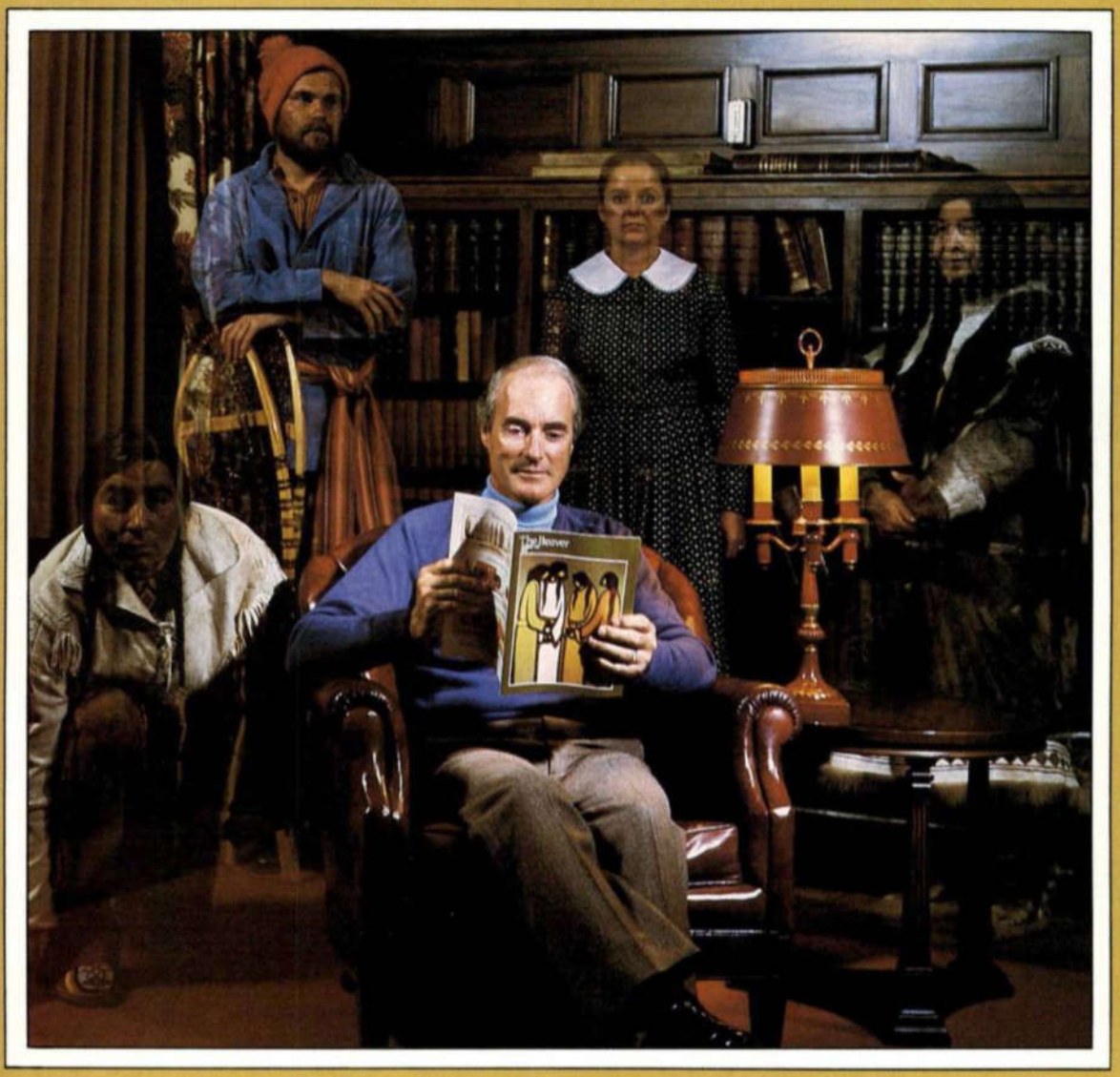


In This Issue - *A PRINCELY UNDERTAKING*
From Peter C. Newman's
Company of Adventurers

A Timeless Gift



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H B C coat-of-arms, circa 1756

Special Book Feature From Peter C. Newman's 'Company of Adventurers'

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COVER: Prince Rupert, after a painting by Sir Peter Lely.

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A Princely Undertaking

By Peter C. Newman

THE LAST OF THE CLASSIC knights-errant, Prince Rupert of the Rhine buoyed the frail fortunes of the Hudson's Bay Company during the first dozen years of its existence, providing the royal patronage and the romantic impulse without which the tiny enterprise would have foundered.

A latter-day Renaissance man, the dark and handsome Prince earned distinction as a cavalry leader, king's admiral, freebooting pirate, chemist, metallurgist, inventor, artist and entrepreneur. Rupert was accurately described by John Buchan, the author-historian and, as Lord Tweedsmuir, governor-general of Canada, as having had 'one of the most varied careers that ever fell to the lot of man.' Never popular in the raffish Restoration court because he was neither by birth nor inclination an Englishman and because his unquiet but disciplined spirit made his hedonist peers uncomfortable, the Prince remains a puzzling historical figure, not as prominent or as widely understood as he deserves to be.

Oliver Cromwell, who broke Rupert's cavalry at Marston Moor, dismissed him as 'a man who hath had his hands very deep in the blood of many innocent people' and the Lord Protector's fellow Roundheads sanctimoniously condemned him as 'the most diabolical of the Cavaliers'. Typical of the times was the lambasting by the anonymous 1644 pamphleteer who, after accusing 'The Robber Prince' of every evil there was, demanded: 'How many towns hast thou fired? How many virgins hast thou ruined? How many Godly ministers has thou killed?'

Such denunciations bothered Rupert not one whit. Inwardly sensitive but outwardly impervious to his legions of detractors, the Bohemian Prince was a military genius who marched to his own drum corps. Preferring to be feared rather than loved, he was scornful of court intrigues and thus very often their victim. 'A man of intense loyalties but few friends, proud, reserved and morose, uncompromising, unpolitical, undiplomatic, single-minded in his chosen craft of war, which he saw as a personal adventure, such was Prince Rupert of the Rhine,' asserted British historian Hugh Trevor-Roper. 'Though he lived long in England, he seems never to have understood it, or loved it, or its people: only his uncle, Charles I, and — to a lesser extent — his cousin Charles II who, on his Restoration, would reward his services with offices and revenues. For the rest, he lived to himself, in a private world, with his blackamoors and his poodles, his books, his laboratory and his instruments of art.'

An incongruous pastiche of Galahad and Cyrano, the Bohemian prince enlisted his panache in the unpredictable causes of his cousins, the English Stuart kings, drawing his sword to defend the divine right of Charles I yet devoting himself equally to the preservation of Parliament under Charles II. Driven out of his father's adopted land when he was less than a year old and forced to flee his British uncle's kingdom a quarter-century later, Rupert spent more than half his life in exile, searching for familiar touchstones that might grant his restless soul the solace of hearth and home. Deprived of a natural sanctuary, he opted for a nomadic existence fighting for (or against) various armies and navies manned by the English, the French, the Dutch and the Italians — never a ruler, always the Prince.

COMPANY OF ADVENTURERS

'The Hudson's Bay Company is woven into the memories and dreams of many Canadians . . .' writes author Peter C. Newman of his new book, Company of Adventurers, published by Viking Canada this autumn. This excerpt from the first volume of Mr. Newman's 'unofficial' history of the Company tells the story of Prince Rupert and some of those who helped launch the dream.

One of those rare warriors at home in the world of ideas, Rupert found no sequestered oasis away from the battle zones but took on the status-quo thinkers of his time with all the dramatic dash of his cavalry charges. 'Because he was abreast of contemporary thought,' noted biographer George Edinger, 'he was ahead of contemporary opinion. He is perhaps the only leader of men, certainly the only royal prince, whose views advanced with his years. He began life, the champion of causes lately lost; and ended it, the protagonist of others yet to be won.'

During the last decade and a half of his life, while actively pursuing the business of the Hudson's Bay Company, Rupert set up a laboratory and metal forge in his lodgings at Windsor Castle. His inventions and innovations add up to an impressive tally. He is credited with fashioning the first primitive torpedo; forerunners of the modern revolver and machine gun; a new method of manufacturing hail-shot; a useful new alloy of copper and zinc still called 'Prince's Metal'; tear-shaped glass globules known as Rupert's Drops that led to the making of bulletproof glass; a new means of boring cannon to ensure truer aim; a naval quadrant making it possible to take observations at sea in rough weather; and a 'diving engine' successfully used to retrieve pieces-of-eight from the sunken Spanish treasure ship *Nuestra Señora de la Concepcion* off Hispaniola. In the autumn of 1667, faced by a brain operation to ease his agonizing migraines, the Prince put his ingenuity to work designing and forging the surgical instruments used to relieve the pain under his periwig.

In his alternate incarnation of artist, Rupert worked out a new means of drawing buildings in perspective and a technique for painting on marble — his best-known marble 'canvas' is an erotic depiction on the the theme of *The Woman Taken in Adultery*. His main artistic coup involved importing into England the art of mezzotint, a method of engraving on copper achieved by scraping away parts of the roughened surface, first taught him by Ludwig von Siegen, a German artist and reserve colonel in the service of William VI, the ruler of Hesse-Kassel. Rupert's prints and etchings reveal a fine hand, and according to P.H. Hulton, Assistant Keeper of Prints at the British Museum, his mezzotints are among the finest ever produced.

Considered the scientific equal of Isaac Newton or Christopher Wren and a founding Fellow of the Royal Society, Rupert took his experiments so seriously that he became the butt of royal jests. Charles II and the Duke of Buckingham would often pay surprise visits to his laboratories to torment the prince, his soot-covered face knotted in concentration as he bent over his fire with vials and beakers. To rid himself of these and less majestic intruders, Rupert kept handy a supply of sulphur powder to throw into his forge-fire; the resultant cloud of noxious fumes drove out the curious interlopers, and the king vowed 'never again to enter that alchemist's hell'.

Prince Rupert in his senatorial phase. From an engraving by J. Bretherton in the Public Archives of Canada.

This streak of stubbornness was developed early in Rupert's character. One of his tutors recalled that the teenage prince while out hunting with his dog had chased a fox into its burrow, and then became stuck. After considerable effort, the teacher succeeded in pulling out Rupert, dog, and fox — all three still firmly attached to each other.

Genealogists have traced Rupert's lineage back to Attila, Charlemagne and William the Silent, one of the 'Sea Beggars' who founded the Netherlands. His father was Frederick V, Elector Palatine, one of the seven German Electors entitled to choose the Holy Roman Emperor; his mother was Elizabeth, the daughter of James I of England and VI of Scotland. Their marriage was a political match-up. James helped arrange it, hoping to enhance his role as an arbiter of the continent's power alliances; young Frederick went along with the plan, wanting to increase the status of his minor principality. But the effects were the exact opposite of the intent. Frederick lost his limited authority and instead of projecting English hegemony into Europe, the marriage was eventually to result in German royal blood crossing the Channel. (Sophia, the twelfth child of that fateful match, married a member of the House of Hanover, and gave birth to George I, the first in the Royal Windsor line that still rules England today.)

The marriage of Frederick and Elizabeth was solemnized at Whitehall Chapel in 1613 with extravagant splendour, the sixteen-year-old bride gliding to the altar swathed in cloth-of-silver beneath her jewel-speckled tiara. The wedding booty of gold, silver and pearls was valued at an unprecedented £1 million and the elaborate celebrations were climaxed with a splendid water masque depicting the union of the Thames and the Rhine. The following morning, James visited the 'young turtles' to inquire whether the marriage had been consummated. The happy duty having been performed, the couple departed for the family seat at Heidelberg.

Half a decade later, responding to the call of Protestant nobles of Bohemia who were seeking support against their Catholic overlords in Vienna (and who had deluded themselves that the Prince Palatinate might prove a powerful ally) Frederick agreed to assume the Bohemian crown. In 1618, the Habsburgs had guaranteed the toy kingdom its religious freedom, but when the Protestant chapels being built by the citizens of Broumov and Hrob were ordered shut, the impudent Bohemians placed two Imperial regents on trial and hurled them out a window of Prague's Hradčany Castle. They landed in a rubbish pit. Although their lives were saved, it was claimed through the intervention of the Virgin Mary, this Act of Defenestration turned out to be the trigger for Bohemian uprisings against the Habsburg Emperor in Vienna, and that, in turn, marked the opening phase of the Thirty Years' War.

Warned against accepting the Crown by relatives and advisers who perceived the political and religious stresses undermining the little country's unstable throne, Frederick still could not resist the allure of becoming Bohemia's monarch. In the first week of November 1619, he and Elizabeth were crowned in Prague Cathedral.

Pausing at the evocative Gothic arch of the Charles Bridge across the rushing Vltava, its serried ranks of monuments haloed by flapping purplish pigeons, the young monarchs fell under Prague's magic spell. Settled and ruled since the second half of the ninth century by a dynasty that included good King Václav (Wenceslas), the city served as a strategic gateway between the western and eastern divides of Europe, acting out, even in ancient times, the Bismarckian dictum that 'whoever controls Bohemia, controls Europe'. A bewitchingly beautiful city, Prague had enjoyed a golden era when its famous university (the first in central Europe) and bridge were built — during the long reign of Charles IV, the King of Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor from 1346 to 1378.

Hradčany Castle, where the new king and queen were installed, was even then an imposing fortification, enclosing several palaces, monasteries and administrative structures, its cellars haunted by labyrinths of underground dungeons for solitary confinement, into which heretics and criminals were lowered by ropes through trap doors. To mark the arrival of the Palatines, the dark double-headed eagle of the House of Habsburg was hastily removed from doorways, curtains and tapestries. The lion *rampant* of Bohemia, the white eagle of Moravia and the ox *passant* of Lusatia were equally hastily pinned in its place.

Only six weeks after the coronation Elizabeth gave birth to a son. The first royal prince to be born in Bohemia for more than a century, he was swaddled in Cambrai lace and rocked in a cradle of ivory filigreed with gold. The young prince was named Ruprecht von Wittelsbach, and the christening was a grand state occasion. The Russian ambassador presented the Bohemian crown with fifty carriages, each bearing gifts of red leather chests brimming with valuable furs, while the homage of other plenipotentiaries was borne in coaches drawn by trained polar bears and tame black stags. The arrival of each well-wisher was heralded by flourishes of trumpets and kettledrums, harmonizing with the peal of bells from the Lower Town. The court attracted Moravian hawkboys, young nobles who carried birds of prey in upraised salutes as a symbol of

The Executioner of John the Baptist, a mezzotint by Prince Rupert, after the painting by Ribera.

British Museum

The Bettmann Archive/B C Hulton

Elizabeth of Bohemia, 'The Winter Queen', Rupert's mother, engraved by W.J. Delft after Mierveld.

National Portrait Gallery, London

Frederick V, Elector Palatine, 'The Winter King' of Bohemia, father of Prince Rupert.

the kingdom's new vitality — their aristocratic gaze translated onto canvas by the great Czech painter Wenceslas Brožik.

Only two awkward events disrupted the seamless joy of the christening celebrations. Rupert's godfather, Gabor Bethlen, the Prince of Transylvania who had vowed to join the Turks in pillaging the Christian world, rocked the baby in his arms and in his great voice predicted to a hushed gathering that the youngster would use his sword to become not only a king but even an emperor. (His empire — Rupert's Land — would be among the largest in history, even though he never saw it.) At the same time, local Jesuits, loyal to Rome and aware of the political momentum gathering outside Bohemia's borders, coined a disquieting title for Rupert's father, referring to him as 'The Winter King' who would vanish as surely as the snow.

While spring stole reluctantly into the ancient town, the Habsburg emperor in Vienna was plotting to bind his Bohemian subjects to his crown as firmly as their spiritual faith was pledged to Rome. The glamorous young rulers of Bohemia, regarded by the Austrian emperor as heretics and usurpers, presented a ready target. Bohemia's Jesuits, secretly in league with the Austrian court, read the character of their people accurately and reported back to Vienna that Prague's inhabitants would never confuse love of country with love of glory. Their fatalistic proverb — 'No man can tell in what faith he will die' — betrayed no wish to sacrifice their lives in defence of imported monarchs.

The Bohemians and Austrians clashed late that autumn along the White Mountains stretching behind Hradčany Castle, only the wild Gabor Bethlen and his Magyar horsemen coming to the rescue of the isolated Winter King. The Habsburg standard was carried into battle by Johann Tserclaes Graf von Tilly, the Belgian-born commander of the Bavarian forces, riding at the head of mercenary Spanish pikemen, who routed the Bohemians in an hour. While the loyal Moravian Calvinists and the Palatine royal guard fought a courageous rear-guard action on the castle grounds, a quick-witted chamberlain remembered the baby Rupert and hid him in the last of the royal carriages clanking and lurching across the Charles Bridge. And so the dream of Bohemian independence had been crushed — not for the last time — only three days before a blizzard that might have bogged down the Austrian invaders. The savage Thirty Years' War that followed reduced a generation of Central Europeans to terror as hired gangs of pikemen, indiscriminately waving crosses and swords, committed the most brutish of slaughters, all in the name of a distant god.

Rupert and his fleeing parents found temporary refuge with the queen's brother-in-law, the mean-spirited Elector George of Brandenburg, who reluctantly permitted the exiles to occupy an empty castle at Kustrin. Three years later, the family found refuge in Amsterdam, where Rupert was first officially recognized by

England when he was granted a royal 'pension' of £300 by his uncle, Charles I. The youngster studied at the University of Leyden, specializing in mathematics, military architecture and draughting.

He spent much of his spare time in rough canvas clothes, haunting the Dutch docks and taverns where sailors congregated at big oak tables, smoking their clay churchwardens and spinning yarns about palmy faraway landfalls. When Rupert was thirteen his father died, and the *emigré* family threw itself on the fiscal mercies of its royal relatives; four years later, in 1636, Rupert and his brother Carl Louis were invited to visit London. Even at seventeen, Rupert impressed the British court with his sense of adventure and strength of character. Much fuss was made over the handsome young hotspur and he was even offered the chance to lead an expedition to Madagascar, off Africa's east coast, with the promise that he could be king of the island should he succeed in conquering it. That quixotic notion was vetoed by his mother, and he reluctantly returned to Holland, where he joined the Life Guards of that enlightened military strategist, the Prince of Orange. Dispatched under Swedish patronage to besiege the Austrians at Vlotho in Westphalia, Rupert was captured and spent the next three years imprisoned in the brooding Danube fortress of Linz.

Here the Rupert saga slips into steamy soap opera. The prison's governor, Count von Kuefstein, had a dark-eyed daughter named Susanne who was asked to minister to the prisoner, and she promptly fell in love with him. Their mutual crush quickly spun into an intense but short-lived romance, consummated in Rupert's non-monastic cell above the rolling Danube. Alas! The young prince was ransomed by his uncle and recalled to England to help fend off the king's enemies, but he never forgot his sweet sojourn in Linz. It was in prison that Rupert also acquired the first of his many pets, a dog he referred to as 'my rare bitch Puddle' and a tame hare that could open the prince's interior cell door with its snout at his bidding.

When Charles I raised his standard at Nottingham in 1642, he vowed that he would return to London on his own terms and named the twenty-two-year-old Bohemian prince his General of Horse, with a command independent of the other royal military and political advisers. Adding a badly needed touch of gallantry to his uncle's disorganized and dispirited ranks, Rupert galloped about on a Barbary charger, clad in scarlet velvet richly overlaid with silver lace, a feathered French beaver crowning his black curly wig. After he had led several successful cavalry charges against the Roundheads, a mythology quickly developed about his dash and invincibility. One cold morning he tied a lace handkerchief around his neck and soon all the Cavaliers were copying him with similar bandanas. Rupert trained his poodle Boye to leap in the air with

Prince Rupert as a youth, engraved by J. Cochran after the van Dyck in the collection of the Earl of Craven.

an exuberant yelp at the word 'Charles,' and to cock his leg whenever the name 'Pym' (Parliamentary Leader John Pym) was mentioned.

The young warrior became a master of the lightning cavalry charge, coaching his men to hold their fire until the most propitious instant. He drove back the Parliamentary forces at every encounter, briskly capturing Bristol, England's second largest city, raising arms and money, enforcing his military priorities and extending his influence in every direction. A grateful Charles soon appointed him his commander-in-chief. An extraordinary marksman — on one occasion he hit the weathercock on the church steeple at Stratford with one musket shot — Rupert pioneered many of the tactics of modern-day guerrilla fighting, living off the land and striking at the most unexpected moments. He was particularly known for his unorthodox manner of obtaining first-hand intelligence about his enemy's strength and intentions. Just before the Battle of Warwick he disguised himself as a cabbage vendor and

drove a cart into the town to examine the fortifications and troop deployments.

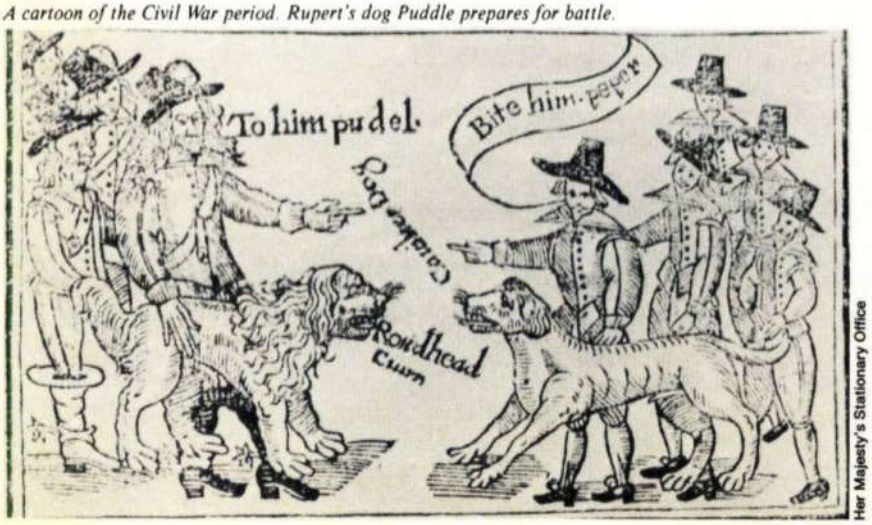
What roused so much resentment against Rupert was his scorched-earth policy of sacking captured towns and debauching their civilian populations. Charles sternly reminded him ' that we desire nothing so much as the good, happiness and peaceable government of our kingdom, and not the effusion of the blood of our subjects.' But Rupert continued to look the other way as his soldiers slaughtered prisoners and pillaged captured churches and hospitals, acting as if he were plundering some barbarian principality instead of trying to settle the ambiguities of a civil war in a nation awkwardly reaching for democracy. 'He had no knowledge of England apart from its court, or of English politics, or of politics at all,' charged Hugh Trevor-Roper. 'The other generals of Charles I may have been amateurs, but they were also Englishmen who deplored the civil war and wanted to end it with as little bloodshed as possible. They were noblemen with a stake in the country and naturally distrusted this brilliant German adventurer in their midst.'

Mounting court intrigue and Rupert's own insensitivity to the political dimensions of the situation in which he found himself gradually undermined his prestige and authority. As the war's most audacious and most successful commander, he drew to himself the blame for its savagery and, like most other military potentates blinded by the hubris of too many easy victories, he eventually overstepped himself. By challenging Oliver Cromwell's highly disciplined and freshly mounted cavalry at Marston Moor in Yorkshire without proper planning or an adequate evaluation of the Parliamentarians' recent Scottish reinforcements, Rupert lost the upper hand. Cromwell cleverly attacked in the evening during a rainstorm, when Rupert's musketeers (and their powder) were drenched. Cromwell's pikemen were more than a match for Rupert's cavalry on the slippery terrain, and the prince, who had retired to his tent and was eating supper when the Roundheads attacked, was forced to flee and hide in a beanfield.

An engraving of Prince Rupert sold as a souvenir during the Civil War, after a portrait by van Dyck.

Rupert retreated to Bristol, which quickly came under siege. He had rashly promised Charles he could hold out against any odds, but once typhus started and

A cartoon of the Civil War period. Rupert's dog Puddle prepares for battle.



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an outlying fortress was captured, he pronounced the city indefensible and surrendered in four days. 'I have no stomach for sieges,' the chastened cavalry commander confessed in a rare display of introspection into both his tactics and personality. Dismissed by the king and charged with betrayal, Rupert demanded and was granted a court martial which cleared him of any lack of courage or fidelity but not of 'indiscretion'. Captured by the advancing Parliamentarians at Oxford, he was given ten days to leave the country. Humiliated but determined to keep fighting, he enlisted as a *mareschal-de-camp* in the French army and after a series of successful engagements on the Spanish front gave up the soldier's life to do battle at sea.

Prince Rupert was to serve the Stuart family's cause with undiminished loyalty for another thirty-six years, first as commander of the royal fleet during the Second Civil War, and later as a blue water pilot, gathering spoils for the court of the exiled Charles II in daring raids across the Mediterranean and Caribbean seas. Bent on running down every sail spotted from his little fleet's crowsnests, Rupert reached back into the tradition of the early Vikings to become a royal buccaneer; his purpose but not his methods distinguished him from outright piracy. He preyed on the awkward galleons running the Spanish Main as they lumbered low on their waterlines laden with cargoes of wine and ivory. With no home port and with revenge as much as booty its guiding spirit, the miniature armada ploughed the Atlantic from the rocky inlets of the African shore to the deserted coves of the West Indies, sheltering in the lee of isolated islands while waiting to resume the hunt. But hurricane squalls off the Azores sank most of his fleet and much of his captured treasure with it, so Rupert had to find temporary employment as a mercenary in the service of the King of Hungary.

Recalled to England at the time of the Restoration by a grateful Charles II, Rupert was granted an annual pension of £1,500, appointed to the Privy Council, named Admiral of the Fleet, and for six years held the important portfolio of First Lord of the Admiralty. He fought the Dutch in three minor wars and helped restore discipline to the Royal Navy — in one instance by throwing two mutineers over the side of his flagship with his own hands. He was tolerant of drinking at sea as long as it inflamed rather than dulled the fleet's fighting spirit, and when there were complaints about excessive liquor consumption, he scoffed at the charges, replying with the memorable riposte: 'God damme, if they will turn out every man that will be drunk, they must turn out all the commanders in the fleet.'

Still in his early forties, Rupert appeared an outmoded figure to the City and within the Restoration court, an all-too-visible reminder of wars best forgotten, an embarrassment to a society trying to compromise its recent past. The martial magic was

Collection of the Earl of Jersey

King Charles II by Sir Peter Lely.

gone and the garlands of war that trailed his name had been won against too many of his current compatriots. There was a tragic tinge to his demeanour. Here was a man who had validated both his physical courage and his social prestige, yet he had always been a prince without a principality, a grandee of empire without an acre to call his own.

Something of a recluse, Rupert did join the royal court in the giddy frolics at the summer resort of Tunbridge Wells. There he met and wooed Margaret Hughes, a spirited and beautiful actress who had commenced her career with the opening of the Drury Lane Theatre in 1663. He eventually purchased for her a magnificent country seat near Hammersmith and had a daughter (appropriately named Ruperta) by her, but they never married. He later formed a passionate liaison with Francesca Bard, daughter of an Irish peer, and had a son by her named Dudley, but again no wedding followed.

After these infatuations had exhausted themselves, Rupert settled permanently into moody bachelorhood as governor of Windsor Castle, an office that cost him £1,500 a year, but which returned handsome rents. He concentrated on his art and scientific experiments but an inadequate personal income and his dreams of empire found him devoting more time and energy to the Hudson's Bay Company. Fur-pelt was becoming a strategic staple, because its water-resistant qualities

were valuable to soldiers trying to keep their powder dry.

The rise of the Dutch commercial empire, based on maritime security and the attendant decline of the Hanseatic League in the Baltic, had driven up fur prices, forcing England to look elsewhere not only for cheaper pelts but also for a more secure and controllable supply of vital timber, copper and cordage for the Royal Navy.

Rupert's meetings at his Windsor apartments with Radisson and Groseilliers ignited his determination to wrest the lucrative North American fur trade from the French. Closely questioning the renegade traders from New France about Indian reports of gold and copper, Rupert (then also Governor of the Mines Royal) was excited by the prospect that the backcountry beyond Hudson Bay would yield not only fur but as much mineral wealth to the Stuart dynasty as the mines of Mexico and Peru had produced for the kings of Spain. He took the visitors at their word, listening with rapt attention as Radisson described the fur harvest and the copper outcrops he had seen north of Lake Superior, and set about organizing a private syndicate to finance an exploratory journey to Hudson Bay.

The original ledgers have been lost, but the earliest subscribers are known to have included at least half a dozen of the Adventurers who later congealed as the Hudson's Bay Company. Using cash advanced by Charles's banker, Sir Robert Vyner, Customs Commissioner Francis Millington and Admiralty Paymaster John Fenn, Rupert's group envisioned a voyage to North America in the spring of 1667, but the first vessel lent to the expedition proved inadequate, and the journey was postponed for a season. 'The full complement of original investors,' according to Fulmer Mood, a University of California historian, 'grew in almost organic fashion from a rudimentary nucleus into a financial entity that was, in social, political and religious composition, and functions fairly complex. . . . The process is not unlike that which happens when a crystal, in suitably prepared mother liquid, grows from a small to a great size by progressive accretions.'

The syndicate had been recruited by Rupert, but it was his personal secretary, Sir James Hayes, who fleshed in the details. The prince had persuaded Charles to lease the associates a two-masted ketch, the *Eaglet*, for a nominal £6 2/6. The even smaller 45-ton *Nonsuch* was purchased for £290 from Sir William Warren, a wealthy London timber merchant who had repossessed the vessel from the Royal Navy the previous autumn.

By May 1668 the ships had been outfitted — grocers, chandlers, sailmakers, ropemakers, vintners, butchers, haberdashers, timber merchants and ironmongers furnished the *Eaglet* and *Nonsuch* as floating department stores. Into the little ships were stowed hundreds of items, including hatchets, spears, scrapers, muskets, blunderbusses, pistols, gunpowder, eighteen barrels of shot, paper, quills, ink, thirty-seven pounds of tobacco, compasses, flags, lanterns, ropes, pitch, tar, axes, saws, hammers, anchors; 'shirts, socks and mittens and other slopsellers' wares'; four dozen pairs of shoes; malt for ship's beer, eight gallons of lemon juice to ward off scurvy; five thousand needles; food such as biscuits, raisins, prunes, peas, oatmeal, salt beef and pork; wines and brandy; fifty-six pounds of cork; and a trumpet. Both vessels also carried necklaces of wampum, the standard currency of the Indian trade, consisting of small shell beads that had been brought to England by Groseilliers. Radisson was instructed by the associates to sail on the *Eaglet* with Captain William Stannard and to winter on Hudson Bay; des Groseilliers, aboard the *Nonsuch* with their old shipmate Captain Zachariah Gillam, was to bring home the pelts from the first summer's trade and return again with provisions. The captains were enjoined to treat the Frenchmen 'with all manner of civility and courtesy, they being the persons upon whose credit we have undertaken this expedition.' The sailing instructions, drafted by Rupert's secretary, Sir James Hayes, covered every contingency: 'We do also declare that if by accident you meet with any Sea Horse or Mors teeth [narwhal horn] . . . it is to be made good to our

The actress Peg Hughes, mistress to Rupert and mother of his daughter Ruperta.

account.' As the expedition's British commanders, the captains were ordered to build fortifications, trade cautiously, hunt whales, prospect for minerals and, as an afterthought, to remember 'the discovery of the passage into the South Sea, and attempt it as occasion shall offer.' The *Nonsuch* also carried a French surgeon named Pierre Romieux and a crew of eight.

After a farewell banquet in his Spring Gardens house, Rupert and the syndicate members were rowed down the Thames to see the ships off at Gravesend. On the misty morning ebb-tide of 3 June 1668, the *Eaglet* and *Nonsuch* were piloted out of the river by Isaac Manychurch for a fee of £5. By evening they had reached the open sea and turned north in a fresh breeze; ten days later they rounded the Orkneys and headed due west toward the New World. Four hundred leagues off Ireland, they were struck by a storm that nearly broached the low-waisted *Eaglet*, forcing her to turn back.

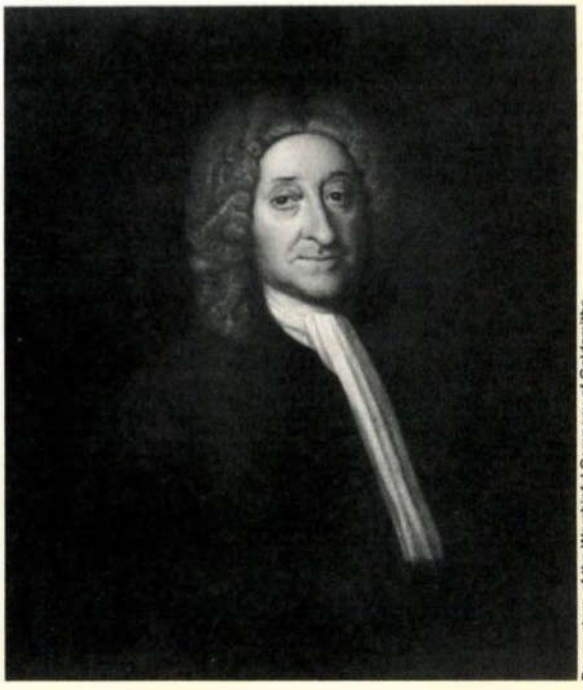
Six weeks later, Gillam sighted the coast of Labrador and turned north, navigating the *Nonsuch* skillfully under clouds of seabirds over the 'furious overfall' into Hudson Strait. The tiny ketch sailed past the Belchers and found refuge in the same river mouth where Henry Hudson had wintered more than half a century before. It was promptly named Rupert River, after the expedition's royal sponsor. The crew chopped down scores of spruce trees and cleared a site; the *Nonsuch*, its keel grating on the gravel of the river bed, was hauled up and careened on the river bank; a stockade and house were built of vertical logs chinked with moss and a roof fashioned from local thatch. A twelve-foot-deep cellar was dug below the frost line to store the beer, pike were gill-netted in the river, and hundreds of geese and ptarmigan were killed and hung for the winter.

The long season that followed was cold and monotonous, but Groseilliers had experienced far worse, and his bush-honed talents, as well as the shipmaster skills of Gillam, made their survival more pleasant and possible. The men developed only a touch of scurvy of the gums, helped along by des Groseilliers's bitter-tasting concoctions of spruce beer, and by the lemon juice brought along on the voyage. That spring nearly three hundred James Bay Indians came to trade. Advised by Groseilliers, Gillam made a 'League of Friendship' with the chief and 'formally purchased' the land. Although there was some pilfering from the stockade and the ship, the British muskets, hatchets, scrapers, needles and trinkets were easily and profitably traded for valuable prime-coat beaver — that is, fur the Indians had worn so that the guard hairs were loosened and the inner down could be combed out more easily for feltmaking. 'This visit,' historians Toby Morantz and Daniel Francis noted in *Partners in Furs*, 'was different from earlier ones. Now the white man came, not in search of a passage to China, but rather intent

Public Archives of Canada

Pierre Esprit Radisson, redrawn from an eighteenth century French print.

Sir Robert Vyner, one of a group that underwrote the voyage of the Nonsuch.



By courtesy of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths

on establishing trading settlements, claiming ownership of the land and bartering for furs. The James Bay Indians accepted the newcomers, not because they were naive or helpless, but because the Europeans brought rare and useful items to trade for the most common of New World commodities, furs.'

On 14 June 1669, pursued by millions of ravenous mosquitoes, the crew of the *Nonsuch* got her away from Rupert River. Gillam sailed quickly north but ice at the top of the bay slowed his passage and it was not until mid-August that he reached open water. Two uneventful months later, the *Nonsuch* cast anchor back in the Thames, Groseilliers glad to find Radisson still alive.

The return of the fur-loaded little ketch caused minimal stir; its cargo, bartered for goods originally purchased for £650, brought £1,379 on the London fur market, and the ship was resold for £152. Wages of £764, plus the required startup investments, customs duties, the damage to the *Eaglet*, and other expenses, had failed to make the voyage profitable. But the backers were pleased — the thesis that Radisson and Groseilliers had been expounding for more than a decade had been proved correct: it was entirely practicable to send a ship into Hudson Bay, winter on its shores and return with a profitable cargo of fur.

Rupert led the delighted backers in obtaining from Charles II the loan of another, larger ship, the pink *Wivenhoe*, and commissioned construction of a seventy-five-ton frigate especially for the new trade, christened the *Prince Rupert*. To promote further shareholding in the Company, the early Adventurers paid out £34 on hats made from some of the hundreds of pounds of best Hudson Bay beaver fur kept back from sale, both as trophies for themselves and as gifts for prominent patrons and suppliers who might be interested in financing the Company.

At age fifty-one the Bohemian soldier-scientist was becoming such a hero to London commerce that a few months after the return of the *Nonsuch* Rupert was invited to lay the cornerstone of London's new Royal Exchange.

What the Adventurers now trading into Hudson Bay really wanted was a royally approved monopoly over the kingdom of fur they had so daringly discovered.

On Friday, 2 May 1670, in Whitehall Palace, they got their wish. Charles II awarded cousin Rupert and his fellow Adventurers a charter as 'true lords and proprietors' of all the sea and lands of the Bay and its entire drainage system.

By any standard, this royal declaration, which established the oldest continuing capitalist company in history, was an extraordinary document. One of the most generous gifts ever presented by a monarch to his subjects, the H B C charter's benefits are more visible in retrospect than they were at the time.

It was a fairly routine (and inexpensive) grant for the king to bestow. Its purposes fitted in precisely with the objectives of the English mercantilism of the day: to direct trade policies in a way that would allow private investors to minimize risks and maximize profits. They, and not the state, would bear the costs of developing markets for British goods in barely accessible colonies with inhospitable climates and independent-minded natives. Similar gifts had been granted to slave traders and gold hunters of West Africa, and only two years earlier Charles II had transferred the Indian island of Bombay (part of the dowry received when he married Catherine of Braganza) to the East India Company for an annual rental of £10.

What made Charles II hesitate for most of a year before actually signing the document requested by Rupert and his impatient associates was the possible effect this particular grant might have on his friendship with Louis XIV of France, who was not only an ally but was also the provider of the pension that allowed the English sovereign to act independently of Parliament. Charles had recently bound himself to the French court by the Treaty of Breda, which returned most of the Cromwellian conquests in America to France. Apart from the northward claims of New France, Louis XIV had himself, on 27 April 1670, granted a charter over roughly the same territory as Rupert's to an obscure Dutch mariner, Jan van Heemskerk. That claim was based on the exploits of the captain's great-uncle, a confused navigator claiming to have made 'a voyage for Holland to the East Indies, entering by way of Formosa in the South Sea and departing to the north of California, reaching Holland by way of Hudson Bay.'

Royal assent was finally granted on the second day of May partly because Rupert could justifiably claim that this was the only reward he had requested from Stuart monarchs despite his life-long dedication to their cause. Another reason, not sufficiently documented, may be that the king was promised a monetary reward for signing the Hudson's Bay Company Charter.

The contents of the H B C Charter itself, at least as far as its provisions for a monopoly were concerned, differed hardly at all from those of many similar royal grants. Because capital gains from overseas voyages were at best uncertain and investments had to be secured over the often lengthy period between the launching of an enterprise and its payoff, it was not unusual for merchants of the day to demand monopolistic protection for their ventures so that potential rivals and interlopers could be kept at bay. 'The granting of such wide territory and such rich resources was no mere favouritism,' Arthur S. Morton noted in his *History of the Canadian West*. 'It carried with it the

obligation first of all to put out the private capital to make the natural resources available, and then to use these to establish settlements and to govern the colony.'

Apart from its leathery durability, what set the H B C's charter apart from similar documents was the formidable dimension of the estate it unknowingly granted. By setting the geographical limits of the territory at the sources of the streams that drain into Hudson Bay, the grant enclosed a virtual subcontinent of 1.5 million square miles, its eastern boundary extending back to the height of land in the unexplored reaches of Labrador, its southern extremities stretching along a huge territory just above the headwaters of the St. Lawrence's many tributaries. Then it swept into the Red River Valley, south past the 49th parallel, vaulting west to the very peaks of the Rocky Mountain divide. Only the wild lands around the great streams gushing northward — the Coppermine, the Mackenzie and the rivers flowing westward into the Pacific (the Columbia, the Fraser, the Skeena and the Yukon) — were excluded.

Named Rupert's Land, this huge freehold was the equivalent of nearly 40 percent of modern Canada: all of northern Ontario and Quebec; all of Manitoba; southern Saskatchewan and Alberta; a huge chunk of the eastern portion of the Northwest Territories; plus much of the American states of Minnesota and North Dakota. Even these gargantuan boundaries did not entirely accommodate the limits set out in the document. Because it was open-ended in defining the outer limits of the Company's trade, the Charter in effect granted a monopoly over trade originating anywhere west of Hudson Bay, so that if the North West Passage had actually existed where navigators of that day thought it did, the H B C would have possessed control of trade rights, based on discovery, all the way to the shores of Cathay.

The commercially-minded Adventurers had no intention of disturbing their monopoly by sponsoring the discovery of a North West Passage. But the Charter's preamble does praise 'our entirely beloved cousin, Prince Rupert' and his associates, who had 'at their own great cost and charge undertaken an expedition for Hudson's Bay in the northwest part of America, for the discovery of a new passage into the South Sea, and for the finding of some trade for furs, minerals,

Hudson's Bay Company

On Friday, 2 May 1670, in Whitehall Palace, they got their wish. Charles II awarded cousin Rupert and his fellow Adventurers a charter as 'true lords and proprietors' of all the sea and lands of the Bay and its entire drainage system.

The Granting of the Royal Charter, from a painting by E.A. Cox.

The Nonsuch En Route to Hudson Bay, from a painting by Norman Wilkinson, C.B.E. for the Hudson's Bay Company.

and other considerable commodities, and by such their undertaking have already made such discoveries as to encourage them to proceed further in pursuance of their said design, by means whereof there may probably arise very great advantages to us and our kingdom.'

Nor was the document particularly clear on how strenuous an effort at colonization was required of its recipients. The H B C staunchly resisted admitting anyone other than its own traders into Rupert's Land for another 142 years — the first real settlers being the ragged band of Red River immigrants brought by Lord Selkirk in 1812 — but in any case there were no sanctions applied or available to spur the Company to create a more hospitable haven.

Unlike some of the joint-stock charters of the time, the H B C grant makes no mention of any religious obligations, although a set of accompanying instructions drawn up by Charles II's Colonial Office did contain this injunction: 'You are to consider how the Indians and slaves may be best instructed in and united to the Christian religion; it being both for the honour of the Crown and of the Protestant religion itself, that all persons within any of our territories, though never so remote, should be taught the knowledge of God, and be made acquainted with the mysteries of salvation.'

But again, there was no enforcing clause accompanying this mandate and, except for one chaplain sent out for a three-year stint in 1683 and another one-season experiment in 1693, the notion of spreading Christianity to the natives or anyone else remained a dead letter. From the very outset, the whole business of the Company was business, not the dissemination of the British way of life or the proclamation of the gospel of Christ.

Quite apart from Charles II's cavalier dismissal of French claims in granting the charter, the English monarch omitted any reference to the well-established occupancy of the Indian inhabitants. The only proviso was that the Company not make war against another Christian monarch without his permission. Although the document clearly recognized that the fur trade depended on the continuing presence of the indigenous peoples occupying the territory in question, no attempt

A portion of the Charter granted to Prince Rupert and his associates by Charles II on 2 May 1670.

was made to draw them into any 'league of friendship', as informal treaties were then known. The H B C was, in effect, being handed a vast hunting preserve, to dispose of and exploit at will.

Certainly, the price exacted by the Charter for these considerable privileges amounted to a bit of Restoration hokum. In return for his splendid gift, Charles II required the Company merely 'to yield and pay' two elks and two black beaver 'whensoever and as often as we, our heirs and successors shall happen to enter into the regions hereby granted.' This bizarre bit of bounty was actually paid only four times. The royal rent ceremony was first performed in 1927 when the Prince of Wales (the future Edward VIII) visited his ranch in Alberta; the second time in 1939 for George VI; the third time in 1959 for Queen Elizabeth II; and the last time in 1970 for the Queen and Prince Philip. The 1970 ceremony was unique in that live black beaver were presented for the first (and last) time.

Despite the inclusion of subsequently discovered weak spots, the Charter had been drafted with a great deal of thought and attention to legal tradition, and even though the circumstances surrounding its land grant changed drastically, the validity of the document was never successfully challenged. This was a remarkable achievement in view of the fact that the authority bestowed on the Company was almost feudal in its prerogatives. No British subject (much less anyone else) was allowed to trade within the Company's territory, and if that regulation was violated, all the goods of the trespasser would be confiscated, with half going to the King and half to the Company. The H B C had the absolute right to administer law and to judge all cases, civil or criminal, on the spot. It was empowered to employ its own army and navy, erect forts and generally defend its fiefdom in any way it chose.

The original Adventurers who came to possess this remarkable document certainly had no doubt about its

worth. The five sheepskin parchment sheets bearing its seven thousand words of text were locked away in an iron-bound chest kept in Rupert's apartments at Windsor Castle. In the context of its time, the H B C Charter's provisions conformed to the purposes of both its sponsors and its recipients. But it was, even at its granting, an important document, easily ranking, as Canadian historian Barry M. Gough has observed, with 'the passing of the Navigation Act of 1660, the establishment of Carolina, the capture of New York, the acquisition of Bombay and Tangier, the attempt to create a Dominion in New England, the reorganization of the East India Company, and the founding of the Guinea Company. With the establishment of this Company to engage in the fur trade of Hudson Bay, the interests of the two parties were united — that of the adventurers for profit and that of the government for the development of trade, which in mercantilist terms was seen as an expedient of strategic expansion to check the French in North America. And along with this, England had opportunities for Arctic discovery and scientific inquiry.'

Prince Rupert has been accorded most of the credit for founding the Hudson's Bay Company. In fact, he directly subscribed to less than 3 percent (£270) of its founding capital, and although he certainly ranked as the Company's chief sponsor, his co-adventurers were a distinguished and potent coalition of dukes, earls, baronets and knights of the realm — joined by some of the most influential of the whiggish merchant princes then beginning to dominate the City of London's blossoming financial district.

The original shareholders were promoters and imperialists in the grand style. 'Profit and power ought jointly to be considered,' mused Sir Josiah Child, the exalted Governor of the East India Company, to his bustling City cohorts. The post-Restoration investment climate could not have been more welcoming. The H B C took shape just as more and more members of the landed gentry turned their attention to investments abroad and much of Whitehall's hierarchy of courtiers devoted their energies to lobbying for royal charters that could be exploited by floating joint-stock companies. These new corporate innovations were designed to spread the risk through absorption of the suddenly available venture capital. The first exchange, dedicated to dealing solely in the marketing of joint-stock investments, had opened in Amsterdam during the 1602 rush to raise the six million guilders required by the Dutch East India Company, whose grandiose new charter encompassed half the earth's surface: the trade and navigation east of the Cape of Good Hope and west of the Strait of Magellan.

The Bank of Sweden was about to be established but England did not officially follow suit for another twenty years. It was during the Restoration that state debtors and private financial creditors began to recognize some common concerns, so that not only Prince Rupert but also Charles II and his brother James, Duke of York, became focal points for City investment decisions in both the public and purely commercial spheres.

In its royal genesis, the H B C was an instrument of foreign trade policy — one side of the imperial coin, the East India Company being the other. The hope was to outmanoeuvre the French, busy exploiting the empire of the St. Lawrence, by squeezing them between British-backed fur trading ventures moving north from the Duke of York's fiefdom on the Hudson River and south from Hudson Bay. The intent was also to command the market in fur, a luxury prized in the Baltic and in Russia, then such a strategic source of naval supplies. The confidence with which the original Adventurers risked their means was based on the assurances of royal support they received through their fellow shareholders Lords Arlington and Ashley, then members of the influential Cabal that maintained Charles II in power. No fewer than six of the original H B C investors sat on the King's Privy Council. They, and Prince Rupert's own personal access to royal attention, made it very clear that the H B C could depend on the monarch's support. Quite apart from his territorial ambitions overseas, Charles was more than a little anxious to create additional revenues for

James, Duke of York, later King James II. Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1683 – 1685.

Hudson's Bay Company

himself beyond the reach of Parliament. He had already contrived to extract a duty of 4½ percent from the reluctant plantation owners of the West Indies and no doubt regarded the favourable prospects of the Hudson's Bay Company as one eventual source to help finance his extravagant royal household.

Risks were minimized by keeping the initial capitalization low, £10,500 compared with £100,000 for the lavish Royal African Company. The dozen-and-a-half original investors all knew one another through common interests. Most of them had shared investments before, mainly in spearheading the Carolina colony or Barbados plantations, or in providing capital for the Royal African, the Levant and Royal Fisheries companies. Nearly all of them had been staunch Royalists during the Civil War, and eight were founding members of the recently chartered Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge.

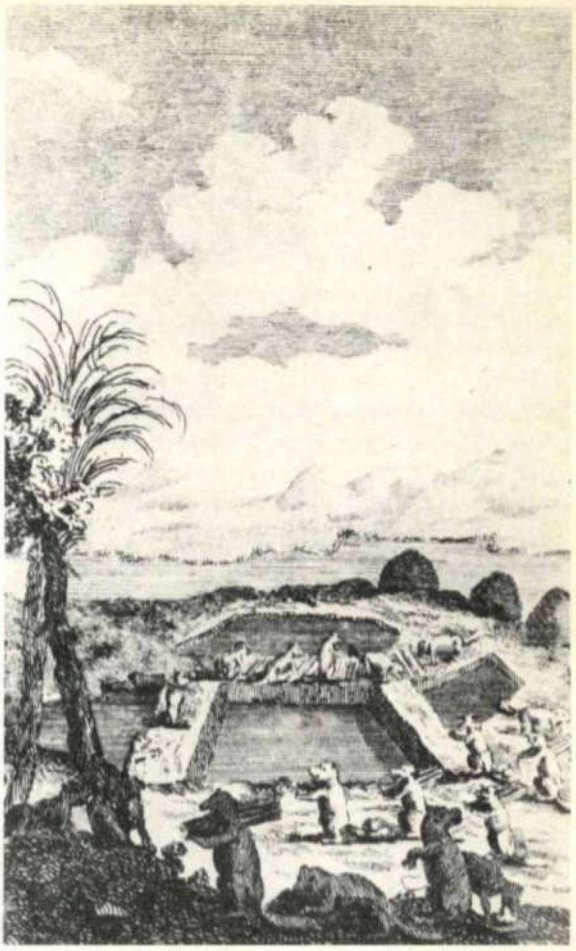
Stuart expansionists all, with a healthy entrepreneurial greed, they shared the vision that pelts taken from the new continent's beavers — animals they had never actually seen and could hardly describe — would make them rich while at the same time advancing the cause of English economic influence. It would have been difficult to gather a more worldly wise group of risk-takers than the H B C's original Adventurers.

SIR GEORGE CARTERET

Samuel Pepys reckoned him the richest man in England, and it was Carteret's personal credit, based on his hoard of bullion safely secured in continental vaults, that rescued the Royal Navy after Charles II had exhausted his treasury. A bold acquisitor who turned piracy into a superbly organized enterprise, Sir George was an intensely loyal monarchist of serious mien who alone dared openly challenge Charles's morals. When Charles and a party of dissolute hangers-on visited Sir George's Cranborne Lodge after a day's hunt in Windsor Forest — and, according to Pepys, 'all fell a-crying for joy, being maudlin and kissing one another, in such a pickle as never people were' — Carteret sternly warned his monarch 'of the necessity of having a show of Religion in the Government, and sobriety . . .'

Patriotically and personally proud of his fiscal indispensability to the Stuarts, Sir George confided to Pepys: 'I have almost brought things to such a pass as I mean to do, that the King will not be able to whip a cat, but that I will be at his tail.'

A tough-and-tumble man of action, Carteret had been bred a sea-boy, one of the hereditary rulers of Jersey and Sark in the Channel Islands. As a young commander in Charles I's navy, he took his 600-ton gunship, the *Antelope*, on a punitive expedition against the Barbary pirates at Sale, blockaded their harbours and sank their galleys by boarding them at night with



Beavers, as imagined by a European artist. . . . 'animals they had never actually seen and could hardly describe . . .'

crews from small shallops. He eventually forced the Sultan of Morocco to sue for peace and give up 270 captives he had been holding for ransom. It was the treasure from this expedition that formed the foundation of Carteret's fortune. Only two years later (in 1639), having demonstrated a talent for accounting — and having proved his loyalty by sharing his booty with the Stuart treasury — he was made Comptroller of the Royal Navy. Wooed by the Parliamentarians, he stayed loyal to the King and spent the early part of the Civil War organizing ordnance and munition supplies for Rupert and the Royalists in the west of England from his cross-Channel base at St. Malo.

As Lieutenant-Governor of Jersey, Carteret had easily recaptured his family's rockbound island from the Parliamentarians, and when the Stuarts were driven out of England, he welcomed the royal retinue-in-exile to Jersey. On 16 February 1649, only seventeen days after his father's execution, Charles II was proclaimed King of England in a brave little ceremony, and the Governor of Jersey was waving his hat in the air and

urging his ragtag corps of drummers to roll their snares with a regal beat.

Until he was again driven off Jersey to seek refuge in France, Carteret used his strategically located little realm as a base for some highly creative privateering, picking off fat Roundhead merchantment to harvest funds for the Stuart cause as well as his own coffers. Even as a pirate Carteret was superbly organized, using swift schooner-rigged galleys, specially built to his design at St. Malo, equipped with cannon and each manned by crews of thirty-six marines at the oars. These lean marauders preyed on the rotound Dutch three-masters rolling home along the Channel from the colonies, and on lumbering coasters delivering salt, grain, sugar and timber to Cromwell's England. The captured goods were sold to France. The loyal but unsentimental Carteret then turned most of the funds over to the exiled court, always careful to keep track of the precise value, making sure he received red-sealed pledges of prime Crown real estate in return.

After the Restoration, Carteret was rewarded with the promised acreage. He was appointed Vice-Chamberlain of the King's Household (in effect, manager of Charles II's finances), a member of the Privy Council, Treasurer of the Royal Navy and Commissioner of the Board of Trade. Elected Member of Parliament for Portsmouth, he spent most of his energies priming the financial pumps to keep the Royal Navy afloat. Pepys, who served as the Admiralty's overworked under-secretary and often felt the sting of his temper, described Carteret as 'the most passionate man in the world.' Carteret tried valiantly but unsuccessfully to keep Charles II solvent, though he had few such problems himself. He built a magnificent country retreat near the gates of Windsor Castle, where Rupert was Warden, and the two aging former pirates joined forces in such commercial ventures as exploiting a local coal mine, manufacturing cannon and founding the Royal African and Hudson's Bay companies.

After introducing Radisson and des Groseilliers to the British Court, Sir George maintained his interest in the fur venture and was its first recorded investor, subscribing an initial £20 on 10 December 1667. Because he was being investigated by Parliament at the time for irregularities in naval accounts and there had been a public outcry about the extent of his private holdings, Carteret placed the H B C stock in the name of his son, Philip.

The younger Carteret was an awkward young man whom Pepys had to coach in the arts of matrimony, and whose young bride the busybody chronicler kissed in her matrimonial bed before drawing the curtains on her wedding night. Philip lost his life in a sea battle near Solebay, off the coast of Suffolk, on 28 May 1672, and the H B C stock was transferred back to his father.

One of the H B C's original Committeemen, Sir George took over the Company's direct management as Deputy Governor in 1674, at Rupert's request. The combination of Rupert and Carteret was the source for the court favour and the managerial impetus that allowed the fledgling Hudson's Bay Company to overcome its initial growing pains.

Sir George Carteret, reckoned by Pepys to be the richest man in England.

ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, LORD ASHLEY, THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY

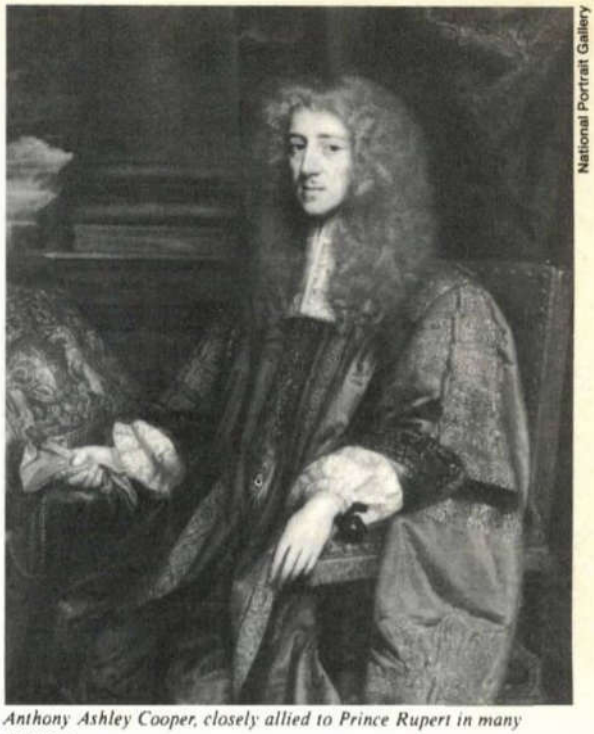
A permanently stooped aristocrat with a polio-crippled body and a festering ulcer that had to be drained through a silver tap implanted in his side, Shaftesbury shifted political allegiance with the frequency and sub-

tlety of the hue changes in a pigeon's iridescent neck feathers. Gilbert Burnet, a contemporary cleric who mapped his transferences of loyalty, marvelled: 'I never saw any man equal to him in the art of governing parties, and of making himself part of them.' What turned Shaftesbury from fast-footed opportunism into luminous statesmanship — he is recognized as the father of modern liberalism — was his stubborn and, for his time, heretic insistence that political parties must rule with the consent of their subjects, and that civil and religious liberties were a right rather than a privilege.

He was orphaned and succeeded to his father's baronetcy at the age of ten. Although his inheritance was plundered by lawyers and administrators, Shaftesbury clawed his way back, and the shrewd management of his remaining assets made him immensely wealthy. His estates earned an annual income at the peak of his success of more than £23,000. A gentleman-commoner at Oxford, the future Earl of Shaftesbury was admitted to Lincoln's Inn, and at nineteen won election as MP for Tewkesbury, but he could not assume his seat because he was under age. Initially committed to the standard of Charles I, he went over to be commander-in-chief of the Parliamentarians' forces in Dorset. A firm believer in religious tolerance and constitutional monarchy, he was a political pragmatist who loved to quote Sir Walter Raleigh's admonition, 'Whosoever shall follow truth too near the heels, it may haply strike out his teeth.' Shaftesbury was one of the twelve commissioners appointed by the House of Commons to journey to Breda and invite Charles II back to England. Created a peer as Lord Ashley, appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer and named to the Privy Council after the Restoration, he became one of the leading English expansionists of his day. Senior member of the Council for Trade and Plantations, he was a proprietor in the 1663 Carolina grant and helped develop British claims in Barbados, the Bahamas and Guinea, investing his personal funds heavily in the Royal African and Royal Fisheries companies.

In most of these ventures, Shaftesbury was a close partner of Rupert. The two men were natural allies, partly because Shaftesbury's staunch Presbyterianism was closely allied to Rupert's religious leanings, and partly because each recognized in the other a compulsion to promote England's naval and commercial supremacy by circumventing the pettiness of court life. Both men came under the influence of Shaftesbury's physician and private secretary, the eminent scientist-philosopher John Locke.

Shaftesbury had purchased his first H B C stock at Rupert's behest on 22 August 1668, and eventually owned one-tenth of the Company. He was already a member of Charles II's infamous Cabal when he was appointed Lord Chancellor of England, the highest



National Portrait Gallery

Anthony Ashley Cooper, closely allied to Prince Rupert in many ventures.

secular office in the land. He supported the liberal Declaration of Indulgence on the grounds that trade flourished where merchants were not subjected to interference because of religious affiliation, but later appeared to contradict his stand by sponsoring measures to exclude Roman Catholics from public office. Shaftesbury spent the rest of his life struggling to survive this dilemma, caused in large part by his growing conviction that the Catholic Duke of York's succession to England's throne was against the national interest.

Despite these travails, which saw Shaftesbury eventually deprived of his high office and incarcerated three times in the Tower of London, he spent a year managing the H B C as Deputy Governor, and between 1673 and 1676 was one of the Company's most active Committeemen. As president of the Council of Trade and Plantations, the last important post he held under Charles II, Shaftesbury was able to provide frequent support to the young enterprise.

Prince Rupert was one of the few members of the royal entourage who did not abandon Shaftesbury, but in 1679, when the Duke of York was named to the Company's Committee, the Earl sold all his H B C stock and escaped into exile.

GEORGE MONCK, DUKE OF ALBEMARLE

At the time of the Hudson's Bay Company's founding, George Monck, the first Duke of Albemarle, was

a Privy Councillor and Lord of Trade and Plantations. He was a tough old professional soldier who had served with Rupert at the Siege of Breda, and with the collapse of Cromwell's Protectorate, had marched slowly toward London at the head of his Coldstream Guards, testing the national mood but refusing supreme military power, giving way instead to Parliament and the Restoration. Co-admiral with Rupert in the second war with the Dutch, he took the British fleet to sea before the plague swept London and returned as the city's military ruler. A Lord Proprietor of the Carolinas, the Royal African and Royal Fisheries companies, he invested in des Groseilliers's first voyage into Hudson Bay, but had died and passed his shares on to his son, Christopher, by the time the H B C was incorporated. The second duke was a classic wastrel, taking no part in Company affairs or much else, ending his days as Governor of Jamaica, where he expired in 1688 from the effects of too much rum.

SIR JAMES HAYES

Unlike most of the other H B C Adventurers, who either died or had parted with their holdings by the time the first dividend was declared, Hayes turned a tidy profit on the fledgling enterprise — though at least some of it seems to have come under, rather than across, the boardroom table. A barrister-at-law and Member of Parliament, Hayes had a personal fortune founded on his marriage to Rachel, the wealthy widow of Henry Cary, the fourth Viscount Falkland.

Through Rupert, Hayes had attempted several entrepreneurial ventures, such as purchasing for a seven-year term the revenue of Ireland, subject to an annual rent to the crown of £75,000. But his main occupation was secretary and investment councillor to the Prince, and his chief private investment was in the Hudson's Bay Company. On the books as its largest shareholder, at one time owning more than 20 percent of the Company, he held on to his financial interest until 1688 and served eight crucial years as Deputy Governor. In his pivotal position as Rupert's brisk and officious *chef de cabinet*, Hayes made his contribution by maintaining a healthy and mutually productive liaison between the Court, the Company and the City. It was Hayes who arranged for the loan of the *Eaglet* from the Admiralty and drafted the sailing instructions for the *Nonsuch*. Hayes successfully petitioned the King in Council to prohibit the illegal importation of beaver fur and made certain that pressure was placed on the New England colonial administration to prevent interlopers from sailing north into Hudson Bay. For these and his many other interventions Hayes was rewarded with cash bonuses, gifts of silver plate and fur pieces for his wife. The Deputy Governor's last years in office were clouded by scandal. The Company's disbursement books showed a long series of expenditures in Hayes's name, vaguely listed in the 'miscellaneous' category. When his audit-conscious fellow Committeemen stiffly requested a detailed accounting, Sir James retreated to his stately mansion, Great Bedgebury, in Kent and refused point-blank to indulge their pointed curiosity.

SIR ROBERT VYNER

Prince of the Goldsmiths, Controller of the Mint, Sheriff and Lord Mayor of London, Sir Robert was the leading merchant banker of his day. He first placed Charles II in his debt when he financed the royal regalia required for the King's coronation, replacing the crown jewels pawned by Charles I. He quickly became a royal banker, borrowing money at 6 percent and lending it to the crown at higher rates, and appropriating excise and customs duties as his collateral. When Sir Robert was appointed Lord Mayor in 1674, Charles II broke precedent by attending his inaugural banquet; when the King tried to sneak away early to visit Nell Gwyn, Sir Robert stumbled after him and drunkenly commanded his sovereign: 'Sir, you shall stay and take t'other bottle.' Charles, regarding his tipsy host with benign tolerance, quoted the old song: 'He that is drunk is as great as a king.' Then, linking arms with his banker, he walked back into the hall.

Vyner was the Company's first treasurer and remained active until ill health and impending bankruptcy forced him to sell his stock in 1681.

George Monck, Duke of Albemarle, Rupert's old comrade-in-arms.

Sir John Robinson, dismissed by Pepys as 'a talking, bragging bufflehead'.

SIR JOHN ROBINSON

Samuel Pepys dismissed him as a 'talking, bragging bufflehead', but he was one of the H B C's early mainstays, having participated in financing the *Nonsuch* expedition, guaranteeing the Company's original underwriting and acting as its first Deputy Governor (1670-3). A commanding figure in Restoration London, Robinson spent most of his energy commuting among his many bailiwicks. He was a great City man — at one and the same time, a Committeeman of the East India Company, Court Assistant (chief lobbyist) for the Levant Company, Lord Lieutenant of the Tower of London (then an important military position), a Member of the House of Commons, Colonel of the Green Regiment, and he had preceded Sir Robert Vyner as Lord Mayor of London. The largest founding shareholder of the H B C, Sir John enlisted his considerable administrative talents in the Company's behalf.

EARL OF CRAVEN

This generous and romantic nobleman had grown grey in the service of Prince Rupert's mother, Elizabeth, the Winter Queen of Bohemia, helping finance her enforced sojourn in Holland and sponsoring her post-Restoration return to England. His estates had been confiscated by Cromwell when he rashly donated £50,000 to help Charles II during his Continental exile. Restored to glory by the Stuart succession, the faithful earl was appointed a Privy Councillor, Tangier Commissioner, Master of Trinity House, one of the Lord Proprietors of the Carolinas and a patentee of the Royal Fisheries Company. He was an original H B C investor. He courted Rupert's sister, the pious Elizabeth, but she opted for a convent instead and there were whispers that the earl had secretly married her mother, the Bohemian Queen — she bequeathed all her private holdings to him. This loyal old family retainer was chief mourner at Rupert's funeral, executor of his will and the guardian of his illegitimate daughter, Ruperta.

SIR PETER COLLETON

The eldest son of a prominent Barbadian sugar planter, Colleton was a leading Restoration imperialist whose overseas interests included promotion of the Carolinas and Bahamas colonies as well as charter ownership in the H B C. Immensely wealthy, he served a term as Governor of Barbados and introduced the magnolia tree to England. A Royalist during the Civil War, he served in government circles as the Keeper of Public Accounts and, even though the Company was far from his major preoccupation, it was at Colleton's London house that Radisson and des Groseilliers found comfortable shelter while waiting to sail for Hudson Bay.

SIR JOHN KIRKE

The third son of a Huguenot merchant who had captured Quebec City in 1628 and had brought Samuel de Champlain to London as his prisoner, Kirke was the only Adventurer with a first-hand knowledge of the American fur trade, a keen understanding of Europe's fur markets and an appreciation of French trading goods and methods. He helped publicize the Hudson's Bay Company by presenting beaver hats to London bigwigs but was less than ecstatic when his daughter married Pierre Radisson.

SIR PAUL NEILE

A natural philosopher and founding member of the Royal Society, Sir Paul held various royal sinecures, expending most of his energies in the dissipation of a large inherited fortune. His H B C founding stock was mysteriously transferred to 'Faith Read of London, widow' on 19 March 1674, and just as mysteriously returned to his ownership seven months later.

SIR EDWARD HUNGERFORD

Created a Knight of the Bath at Charles II's coronation, Sir Edward richly earned his reputation as

the Restoration's most recklessly extravagant spendthrift, but he also had a practical side. When his ungainly town mansion, Hungerford House (near present-day Charing Cross Station), burned down, he had market stalls set up on the site and turned many a penny and pound on the emergency venture. Elected to the House of Commons a dozen times, Sir Edward was associated more with self-serving amendments than with any new legislative initiatives. An H B C Committeeman for only one season (1674-5), he failed to distinguish himself in this or any other capacity and died penniless.

JOHN PORTMAN

The Hudson's Bay Company's first Treasurer, Portman was a London goldsmith and banker, working out of the Unicorn on Lombard Street. Also treasurer of the Carolinas and New Providence (Bahamas) companies, he participated in so many dubious investments that when he died in 1683 he was occupying a cell for bankrupts deep in the Fleet prison for debtors.

FRANCIS MILLINGTON

A Puritan London businessman, Millington made a small fortune as a successful draper, brewer and Commissioner of Customs. Married to the fifteen-year-old niece of Sir Robert Vyner, he owned H B C stock worth £300 at incorporation.

SIR JOHN GRIFFITH

The only one of the original Adventurers who was a professional soldier, Captain Griffith had served Charles II during his exile in Holland and was later granted the offices of Keeper at the Blockhouses of West Tilbury and at Gravesend.

WILLIAM PRETYMAN

An ardent Royalist and merchant adventurer to India who had served as the Stuarts' London agent during Charles II's exile, he afterward bore the proud title 'King's Remembrancer of the First Fruits' and held a sinecure in the Treasury. His role with the H B C was limited to being the first subscriber — he acquired his original stock on 10 February 1667.

JOHN FENN

The Paymaster of the Admiralty, Fenn held £250 in H B C stock at incorporation but immediately assigned all his shares to Sir James Hayes.

SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN

The stellar Oxford-educated astronomer, Wren turned to architecture and was eventually named Surveyor-General to Charles II. After the Great Fire of London, he drafted a grandiose plan for the city's rebuilding. When it was rejected because of costs, Wren had to content himself with a grand new St. Paul's Cathedral, fifty-two parish churches, thirty-six livery companies' halls, the London Custom House, Greenwich Hospital and dozens of private residences. He collected healthy fees from some clients but charged the state a modest £300 for creating the magnificent cathedral, an obsession that occupied his talents for thirty-five years. He regarded this labour as so sacred that workers were dismissed if overheard using swear words. Hounded by jealous colleagues, Wren was forced out of all his professional involvements and died of a chill at the age of ninety. He was buried under a simple slab of black marble on which his son carved the immortal epitaph: *Si monumentum requiris, Circumspice* — 'If you seek his monument, look around.'

Wren was no impractical dreamer, having invented the blood transfusion process and finding time to serve as a Member of Parliament for four different constituencies. England's busiest architect, he invested his fees wisely, mainly in the Hudson's Bay Company. Not among the original partners, Wren invested £200 in the Company's stock on 5 June 1679. Three other lot purchases over the next four years brought his holdings to £1,200. He sold the stock at a profit, but while he held it Wren was no nominal investor. Elected four times to serve as an H B C Committeeman (between

William Craven, Earl of Craven, a faithful servant to Rupert's family.

1679 and 1683) he chaired meetings whenever Rupert or his Deputy Governor were absent. At one such gathering on 19 September 1682 the Committee passed a resolution 'that shutters, bolts and locks be made to the warehouse as Sir Christopher Wren shall judge fit to be done . . .'

ROBERT BOYLE

Less active in the Company's affairs but an early investor (1675), the father of modern chemistry retained his stock and even willed it to his heirs. A pious natural philosopher, Boyle not only formulated the laws of physics that led to the invention of the steam engine but had a lively interest in overseas development, including the New England Company, established 'for the propagation of the Gospel in New England and the adjoining parts of America.'

LADY DRAX

The first woman stockholder of the H B C, Margaret Drax was the second wife of James Drax of York and London, a financier who made his fortune in the sugar plantations of Barbados. She acquired H B C shares worth £300 in June 1670 and doubled her holdings seven years later but took no part in the Company's affairs. (One of her descendants was the noted World War I sea dog, Admiral the Hon. Sir Ranfurly Plunkett-Ernle-Erle-Drax.)

These original Adventurers gathered once a week to consider the Company's slowly expanding affairs. The first meetings were held either at Rupert's lodgings in Spring Gardens or in the Chamber of the King's Wardrobe, a sort of bursar's office by the Whitehall Palace gates. The domestic operation of the royal household was being managed by Sir George Carteret, who took an increasingly active role in the H B C's policy formation.

'Absolutism, pomp, formality and, . . . a sense of personal responsibility for retainers — all characteristics of feudalism — marked the rule of the Hudson's Bay Company from the beginning,' Agnes C. Laut wrote in *The Adventurers of England*. 'The adventurers were not merely merchants and traders; they were courtiers and princes as well.'

One early item not expanded upon in the Committee's agenda concerned the 'sundry charges' paid to Rupert as a reward for having obtained the Company's charter. At an agreed signal during one 1671 Committee meeting, Rupert feigned a spell of indisposition, excused himself and left the room. His friend Shaftesbury raised the issue of the prince's compensation and a substantial sum was voted to him, but the exact amount was not recorded.

Prince Rupert in early life, from a portrait attributed to Honthorst.

Rupert was no titular governor; his contributions went far beyond the exchange of court gossip, which was the second most popular indoor sport of his day. He interceded again and again with Charles II on the Company's behalf, procuring, for example, an exemption from having to pay duty on trade goods sent out to Hudson Bay.

Early board minutes record gifts of 'beaver stockings for the King,' 'silver tankards, hogsheads of claret' and 'cat skin counterpanes for his bed' to friends of the Company. All the Adventurers had to take oaths of corporate fidelity, and careful provisions were made for possible injuries to the officers and servants being sent into Hudson Bay. The loss of a toe by frostbite was assessed at £4, while more serious (or less frequent) injuries were to be settled on the more enduring basis of a yearly £30. A tone of parsimonious paternalism pervaded the H B C's regulations from the beginning. Any officer who died in the Company's service was granted the right to a 'funeral by torchlight to St. Paul's — Company and crew marching in procession. Cost not to exceed £20.'

After 1675, when Rupert suffered through serious brain surgery, he retired more and more into seclusion in his Windsor Castle apartments. 'In the eye of men about the court . . . "his manners were ungracious; he had a dry hard-favoured visage, and a stern look, even

when he wished to please; but when he was out of humour, he was the true picture of reproof", according to a contemporary description quoted by A.S. Morton in his *History of the Canadian West*. He was still Vice-Admiral of England and used his good offices to authorize the flying of the King's Jack on the H B C supply ships, but was being frequently over-ruled on substantial issues by, of all people, Samuel Pepys, then Secretary of the Navy. Because too many high-born Royal Navy officers knew too little of their craft, Pepys had recommended every candidate for lieutenant be eligible only after he had served three years at sea, at least one of them as a midshipman. Rupert objected that service as a midshipman was 'beneath the quality of a gentleman,' but his uncharacteristically reactionary view did not prevail. As Thomas Macaulay noted: 'There were gentlemen and there were seamen in the navy of Charles the Second. But the seamen were not gentlemen; and the gentlemen were not seamen.'

Though deep in his senatorial phase, Rupert took part in one more grand political ploy, attempting, with more desperation than good judgement, to deflect the impending succession to Charles II of the Duke of York. The Queen, Catherine of Braganza, had failed to produce any heirs and Rupert's friend, the Earl of Shaftesbury, fearing that the consequence of placing a Roman Catholic on the English throne would be civil war, had introduced a bill in Parliament to eliminate the Duke of York from the succession.

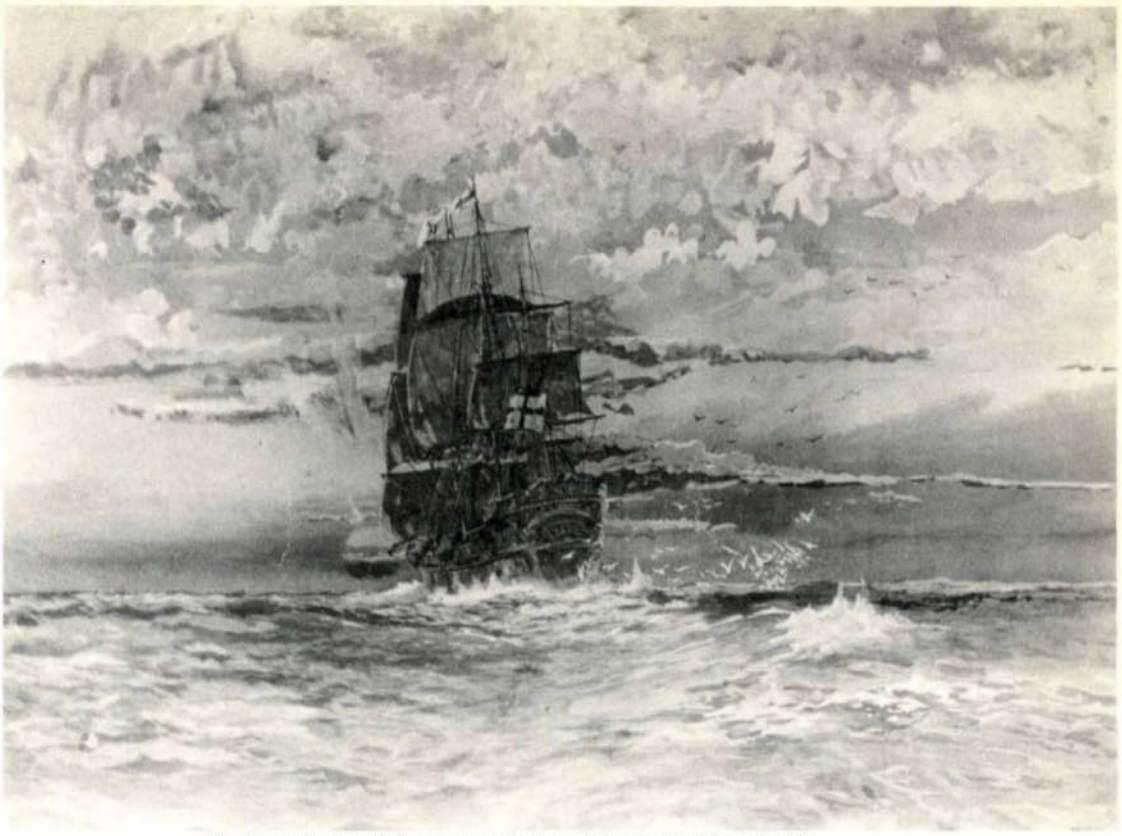
Outside London, Shaftesbury organized his own political movement called the Country Party (or Whigs by his opponents, after a group of loutish Scottish cattle drovers) and was arrested by the king, charged with high treason and thrown into the Tower. Set free by a Grand Jury, he was temporarily reinstated, but Rupert was the only highly placed figure within the Stuart court on whose loyalty Shaftesbury could still rely.

Rupert had meanwhile been plotting with the Hanovers, urging the cause of his nephew, the twenty-year-old George Lewis [later George I], as a qualified claimant to the English throne. Rupert installed his German candidate in Whitehall, but the secret negotiations between the prince, Lewis and Charles II came to nothing. Throughout, Rupert made it clear that while he was in sympathy with the Whigs, his first loyalty was to the Stuarts. Charles reciprocated the old salt's faith by informing his inner circle that Prince Rupert was the only Whig welcome in his presence.

By the autumn of 1682, Rupert's health began to give way, his old war wounds reasserting themselves. The Cavalier cause for which the Bohemian warrior had fought had been triumphant for more than two

Prince Rupert's London, seen from Southwark, 1660.

Guildhall Library, London



The Nonsuch sets sail, from an imaginative painting by Franklin Arbuckle.

decades, its animating purposes all but forgotten, its leader all but dishonoured. No more churchbells rang to warn of his approach, as the wrinkled, rheumy-eyed Prince hobbled around the Berkshire countryside accompanied only by a loping black dog at his heels and a majestic hawk on his wrist.

In mid-November Rupert moved to his townhouse in Spring Gardens and collapsed while out for an evening of theatre. He was diagnosed as having pleurisy and high temperature. That Saturday night fever did not subside. The following Monday the H B C Committee met at his house, but Rupert did not have the strength to attend. On the Tuesday, hearing that his noble friend was on his deathbed, Shaftesbury fled the country. The next day (29 November 1682) Rupert died, refusing to be bled and expiring peacefully but fully in charge of himself.

The funeral for the sixty-three-year-old prince was staged at Westminster Abbey a week later, with the court ordered to observe full mourning, three weeks in purple and three weeks in black cloth. Two companies of Foot Guards, followed by the prince's watermen, footmen, huntsmen, grooms, gentlemen servants, pages, physicians, lawyers and chaplains, led the procession. Then came his secretaries, pursuivants, heralds and so on up the social ladder — the barons, bishops, earls, dukes and the Marquess of Halifax, Lord Privy Seal. The coffin was borne by stalwart Yeomen of the Guard from Windsor Castle and behind them, after another bevy of grieving nobles, head bowed, slow-marched the Chief Mourner — William, Earl of Craven, the loyal retainer from the days of exile, paying his final homage to the last of the Winter Queen's sons.

The body was laid to rest in Henry VII's chapel, but no monument survives to mark Rupert's tomb. Only a bittersweet epitaph identifies the final resting place of the Hudson's Bay Company's founder and first governor: *A soldier's life is a life of honour — but a dog would not lead it.* ♦

To the Rebellion in a Folding Canoe

By Enid Mallory

Dr. Campbell Mellis Douglas, V.C.

AS DR. CAMPBELL MELLIS DOUGLAS left Swift Current on his 200-mile canoe journey to Saskatoon in April 1885 friends came to bid him goodbye and '. . . request locks of my scanty hair with a view to leaving as little as possible for the natives whom I was expected to meet, to exercise their peculiar talents on.'

He made a risky commitment when he volunteered to paddle down river and try to help the men wounded at the Battle of Fish Creek. In Canada's North West the destruction of the buffalo had reduced 26,000 Indians to a desperate plight. Hungry, baffled and bitter as they were, no-one could guess how many would join Riel's uprising. Along the North Saskatchewan, young aggressive warriors of Big Bear's tribe had already killed whites at Frog Lake; Poundmaker near Battleford was having trouble restraining the young men of his reserve. Here along the South Saskatchewan, the Teton Sioux under White Cap (a remnant of Sitting Bull's Sioux who had destroyed Custer in Montana nine years before) were known to have joined Riel. There was a strong possibility that Douglas would be ambushed by Indians or Métis scouting the riverbank.

As he moved along in the pale April sunshine or tried to sleep on the riverbank in the cold nights, he had ample time to think about home and ponder the events which had pulled him 2,000 miles from his Ontario lake to this muddy Saskatchewan River.

A month before he had been at home near Peterborough, learning to farm and working on his boats. At 45, recently retired from the British army, he thought he had found heaven-on-earth in the Kawartha Lakes. Then, on 27 March a telegram arrived.

From newspapers which reached Lakefield daily by train, he had some knowledge of the unrest in the Canadian North West, but the telegram from Ottawa took him by surprise. Adolphe Caron, Minister of Militia and Defence, was calling on him to take charge of medical arrangements for the troops being sent west to deal with Riel.

Louis Riel had already challenged the Canadian government in an 1869 Manitoba uprising, and had been in exile in the United States. Now, at the request of Métis buffalo hunters on the Saskatchewan, whose life-style was disappearing and whose land claims were being ignored by the Dominion government, he was back. On 18 March, after seizing hostages at Batoche, he had proclaimed a Métis government with Gabriel Dumont his adjutant-general.

Ottawa's ear had been cocked uneasily to the West for some time. On 23 March, Sir John A. Macdonald called out the Winnipeg militia. Then on Friday, 27 March news reached Ottawa of the fight at Duck Lake between Superintendent Lief Crozier of the North West Mounted Police and a band of Métis and Indians led by Riel and Dumont. Seventeen men were dead, twelve of Crozier's police and five of the Métis including Dumont's brother, Isidore.

Douglas knew little of what was going on when he wired Caron from Lakefield on Saturday. 'Will leave here this afternoon . . . see you tomorrow morning.' As he put together his medical instruments and Eleanor packed his warm clothing, he was mumbling the names of medical men at McGill where he had taught a first-aid course the previous winter.

Eleanor paused and looked at him, 'What do you have to begin with? Is there a Medical Staff in Canada?'

'Not that I know of. I fear I am supposed to create one out of thin air.'

'How?' his sons both wanted to know.

'Don't know. But I must go down there and give it a try.'

The army sent to deal with Riel's first uprising in 1869-70 had been composed of British regulars. Now only one small British garrison remained in Canada, in far-off Halifax. The Canadian government this time was on its own. The task would be enormous: to mobilize a large-scale army in the east and, with the Canadian Pacific Railway still unfinished around Lake Superior, get it quickly to the point of trouble on the prairie, 2,000 miles away.

Mellis Douglas was both a man of action and a dreamer, but he was not an organizer. Born at Grosse Isle on the St. Lawrence where his father, Dr. George Douglas, was in charge of the quarantine hospital, he had spent most of his adult life in the Imperial Army, making a hero of himself in the Bay of Bengal when he achieved a miraculous rescue of seventeen men from Little Andaman Island where they were trapped between pounding surf and arrow-shooting natives who had already killed eight British sailors. For this he received the Victoria Cross. For saving several of his own crew from drowning in the same incident he was awarded the Silver Medal of the Royal Humane Society.

The dream which now shaped his life was to build and market folding canoes to a design which he had patented in both Ottawa and Washington two years before. As he left Lakefield for Ottawa his folding canoe was with him on the train.

All dreams and heroic adventures aside, what he was asked to do now was to organize a medical department in five days in a country in which he had lived for less than three years of his adult life. He set up office at 9 Prince of Wales Terrace in Montreal, and began to recruit doctors and assemble medical and surgical stores to leave Wednesday evening, 1 April. That confusion reigned is evident from the telegrams going back and forth between Ottawa and Montreal:

From A.P. Caron to Dr. Douglas: 'Who has charge of Medical arrangements?'

From C.M. Douglas to the Min. of Mil.: 'Do not know who has charge of Medical arrangements except myself, am making preparations as fast as possible. Letter to you this evening.'

From A.P. Caron to Dr. C.M. Douglas: 'Nobody in charge of Medical arrangements but yourself.'

On Tuesday he threw up his hands in despair and wired to the Minister of Militia: 'Impossible to organize whole medical department for three thousand five hundred out of nothing in time required, suggest applying to U.S. Medical Dept. for help, on ground common humanity. Will return to Ottawa to confer with you about it.'

Caron wired back: 'What you suggest cannot be done. Better come up and confer with me.'

Douglas went up to Ottawa and, on Wednesday, 1 April Caron appointed Dr. Darby Bergin, MPP for Cornwall, Ontario, to be Surgeon-General. Dr. Thomas Roddick, surgeon to the Prince of Wales Regiment, became Deputy-Surgeon-General, and Dr. Michael Sullivan, Purveyor-General. For staff, they turned to the medical schools of Toronto and McGill. However, it took another week for these three men, all active in medical work in Canada, and familiar with the Canadian militia, to put together a hospital. Not until Wednesday, 8 April did Dr. Roddick leave Montreal with his No. 1 Field Hospital commanded by Dr. Douglas.

The hospital party, travelling as civilians via Chicago and Minneapolis, reached Winnipeg on Sunday, 12 April. Major General Frederick Middleton, a retired British infantry officer now commanding the Canadian Militia, had left Winnipeg on 27 March with the 90th of Winnipeg, the only troops in the West. By 5 April the first troops from the east had passed through

Adolphe Caron, Minister of Militia and Defence, directed efforts to quell the Rebellion of 1885.

Public Archives of Canada

Douglas Family Collection

The Douglas family on the porch of their home near Lakefield, Ontario.

Winnipeg after suffering terribly from cold on the long marches across the unfinished gaps on the CPR.

The doctors' orders were to establish a base hospital at Swift Current on the CPR line and then use the Saskatchewan River to reach the field forces. As Swift Current offered no housing for a hospital, the CPR supplied Canada's first hospital train.

Middleton's plan involved three columns, all moving north from the CPR line. His own column had already struck north from Qu'Appelle on a trail that would become impassable with the spring thaw. Lt. Col. W.D. Otter had marched overland from Swift Current to the relief of Battleford. A third column under General T.B. Strange would move north from Calgary through Edmonton to Fort Pitt.

Douglas took a hospital outfit on to Calgary by train to join General Strange. When he arrived back at Swift Current, he found the camp in a state of great unease. Roddick, who had little idea of the navigational problems of the South Saskatchewan, had dispatched a hospital staff aboard the Hudson's Bay Company steamer, *Northcote*, and nothing had been heard of her since. On 25 April Middleton had wired news of the disastrous encounter with Riel's men at Fish Creek. Middleton now had 50 casualties and no hospital.

As Major General J. Wimburn Laurie, in charge of arrangements at Swift Current, breakfasted with a small party including doctors Roddick and Douglas, the mood was heavy with frustration.

'The teamsters say the *Northcote* will never make it until the Rocky Mountain snows begin to come down.'

'Encumbered with a scow on either side, heavily loaded with troops, equipment and hay, oats, food and ammunition . . .'

'How much water does she draw?'

'Four feet aft.'

At this point something tempted Dr. Douglas to offer to go down the river, 200 miles to Saskatoon, in the little folding canoe he had brought along from Lakefield.

'That's very public spirited of you, Douglas,' said General Laurie and, as Douglas put it later, he felt that he was nailed.

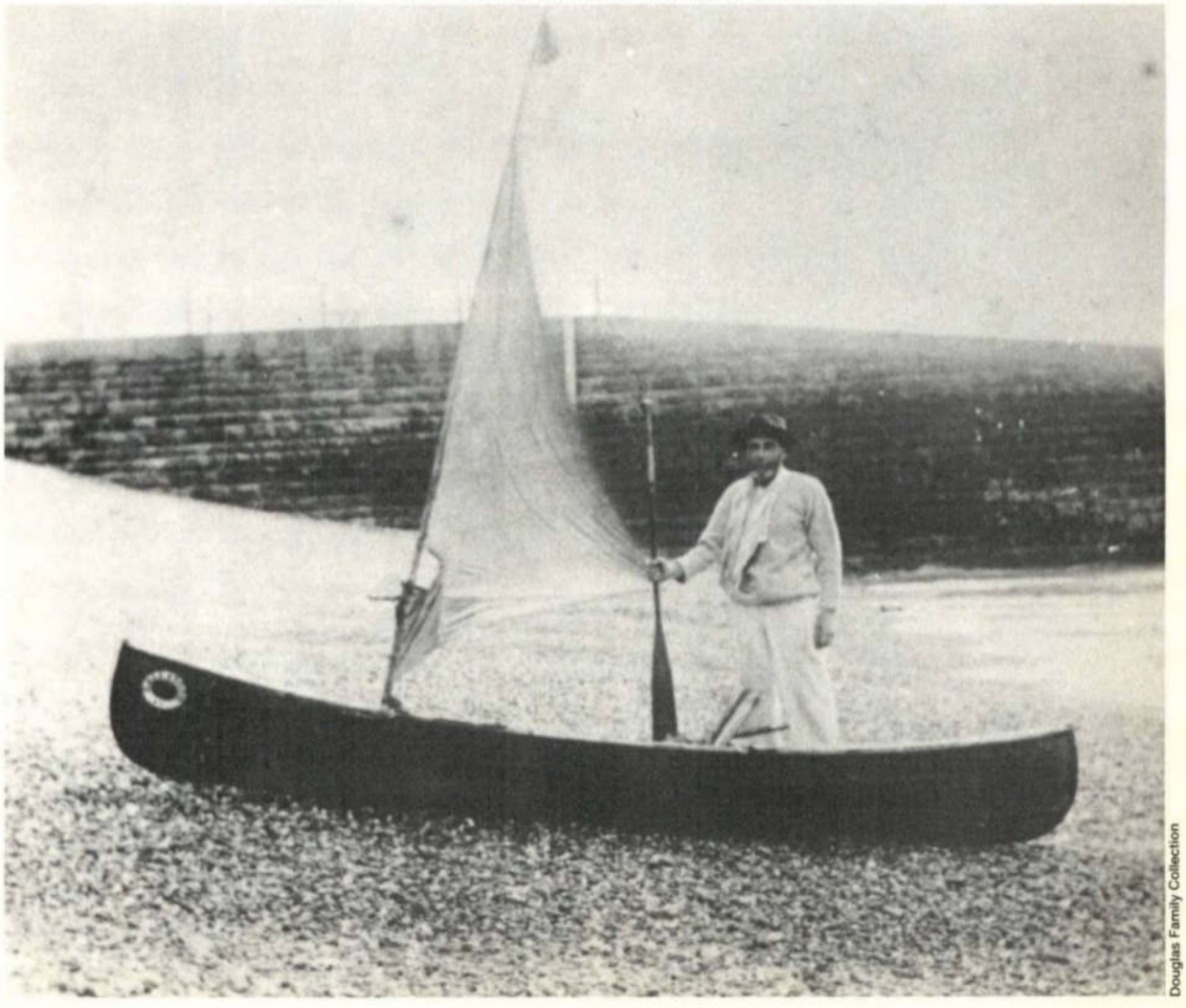
> I had mental visions of wily Indians in ambush taking a pot shot at the solitary navigator and sending him to the happy hunting grounds to paddle his own canoe at his leisure. I could not go back on my offer however, and next morning saw me seated on a buckboard drawn by an Indian pony, my folding canoe beside me in a packet.

His 'apparently meek and broken-down cayuse' bolted while the doctor was re-arranging his load, and left him standing alone on the wide, dry prairie foolishly holding his folding canoe. After scattering cargo in a wide circle, the 'cayuse' hit the home trail for Swift Current with Dr. Douglas running along behind, his 45-pound canoe package under his arm. Horse and runner had covered two or three miles this way when they came upon a party of teamsters camped for dinner. About twenty of them had spread out and tried to catch the runaway but the meek-looking beast had artfully dodged them all.

'It's no use running,' they advised Douglas. 'Take it quietly.'

So Douglas did. Two miles farther on he came upon other teamsters and here, to his delight, he saw his pony tied to the wheel of a wagon, with his buckboard intact. 'He looked as sleepy as ever, and immediately coughed as if to hint his chest was delicate.'

Dr. Douglas with the Saskatoon, the canoe in which he paddled to the Rebellion.



Douglas Family Collection

After this rather backward start, Douglas again pointed horse and rig north and at five o'clock reached the river. 'I tried my boat which was a new one, hitherto unused and built the previous autumn in Peterborough. It was of the Canadian model, 12′ in length by 2′-6″ beam and 12″ deep amidships.'

Shortly after daybreak next morning, Surgeon-Major Douglas was underway. Putting his muscle to the double-bladed paddle, and helped by the current, he moved at five miles an hour. 'At first I saw an Indian lurking in ambush behind each clump of brushwood. After I had passed a great many clumps and no sign of Indians had come forth from them I began to feel more at ease'.

Later evidence showed that Riel had planned to capture the *Northcote*. Other events altered his plan, saving both the *Northcote* and Douglas from attack.

Staying in the channel was a challenge: '. . . unless I watched carefully the set of the current I would suddenly find myself with only about two inches of water under my keel.' Whenever he tried a short cut, he found himself, '. . . wading through sand and icy cold water, bare-legged, towing my canoe behind me into the main channel.'

Food consisted of 'hard tack', tinned meat, tinned fruit, cocoa, tea and sugar. His camp at night was simple, the canoe turned bottom up, one gunwale resting on the ground, the other propped up by a short stick. Inside, his bag and blanket formed a bed. A waterproof sheet over the canoe and opening completed his shelter. The nights were intensely cold and the doctor would awake to find his waterproof sheet stiff with ice.

He reached the Elbow, where the river bends abruptly to the north, about seven o'clock on the third day. Here was a solitary hut, the first sign of habitation he had seen. 'It stood bare and lonely on the hillside above the river, tenantless, without a sign of cultivation near it, and it added to the loneliness of the scene.'

Downstream from the Elbow the river's course was easier to follow but a stiff breeze blew up the river. 'After hammering against it, plash, plash, for an hour or so, I came to the conclusion the game was not worth the candle, so I made for shore, landed, built a fire, by which I read, meditated, and slept the remainder of the day and night. I was up betimes in the morning; about three o'clock the temperature in my lair underneath the canoe was not conducive to sleep, the wind had fallen during the night, and the river showed glassy and calm.'

About 20 miles downstream, the lone canoeist was startled by the boom of a steam whistle. Excited, he drove his boat on for all he was worth and behold, there was the *Northcote* stuck on a sand bar.

The soldiers on the *Northcote* knew who he was; scouts from Swift Current in search of the *Northcote*, had sighted him near the Elbow and carried the news to the steamer. Captain Kirwan of the Midland Battalion wrote of the incident later:

> On the 1st of May we saw something moving on the river behind us. It was a long way off, but we soon found it to be a canoe, and we then knew that Dr. Douglas, V.C., was in our wake, and that, aided by the current, he would soon be on board. He left Swift Current six days after us, and here he had overtaken the steamer, when we were not much more than half-way to our destination. On he came with his double paddle moving like a windmill, and we all gathered on one side of the barge to give him a welcome.

The red-coated line of militia soldiers cheering his arrival was a welcome sight to Douglas who had not seen a human for three days. He spent a few hours on board talking to Captain Sheets, the hospital staff and the Midlanders. But he soon tired of the '. . . monotony of seeing the ship, heavily loaded, with two barges alongside, warped or lifted from one sand bar on to another. So after dinner, I launched my canoe again, and left the *Northcote* as I had found her, stuck on another sandbar.'

As he approached the Moose Woods, wild geese, wild swan and ducks enlivened his day. Beaver splashed into the water from the banks. Once a herd of antelope gazed at him from the riverbank. After a long day he put into shore, found a dry spot and slept soundly under his ice-caked rubber sheet.

On the morning of 2 May his fifth day of travel, he made his way between steep mud-banks. About 20 miles downstream where an island split the current and provided pretty river scenery, a house stood on the shore with two boys staring at him. From them he learned that he was close to Saskatoon.

Two or three miles farther along, he arrived at the little settlement. 'The village was in a state of commotion . . . some thirty wounded men were to be brought in that afternoon. So I had other work than canoe paddling to do . . .'

Middleton, still camped at Fish Creek, had decided he could wait no longer for the *Northcote*. His wounded must be moved without her, and he must head north again to meet Riel. Crude stretchers were fashioned from cattle hides and strung on wagons, and thus 35 wounded men were making the rough 30-mile journey to Saskatoon under the care of Dr. Orton, senior surgeon with Middleton's column.

Saskatoon had about twenty wooden buildings in all. A schoolhouse made the best available hospital.

Public Archives of Canada

A group of wounded soldiers from the Rebellion. The man in white at the extreme right may be Dr. Douglas.

The inhabitants of Saskatoon would billet the less serious cases. Dr. Douglas set to work at once with meagre equipment borrowed from the settlers and, as the teams came in with men suffering badly from the trip, he was able to greet them with a semblance of order and provide them with medical care.

Nursing was a problem; a few settlers' wives did what they could. At first it appeared that lack of food would be another problem but the Commissariat Department had arranged that a large drive of cattle should arrive with the wounded.

Dr. Douglas had put in an exceptionally long day by 2 A.M. when someone brought the news that Dr. Roddick had arrived. The day after Douglas set out by canoe, Roddick had decided to go north by land using the Moose Jaw trail which had been unused because of hostile Indians and spring breakup. He took with him Surgeon E. Pelletier and four dressers, a large field pannier and two wagon loads of stretchers, dressing and medical gear. The party found the travelling better than expected and reached Saskatoon without trouble. They and their supplies were a welcome sight to Douglas and Orton at 2 A.M. that night.

Roddick and Douglas were up again at 7 A.M. going over cases with Dr. Orton who had to leave at 11 to rejoin his column. Middleton was chafing to move.

On the following day, Roddick left Douglas in charge at Saskatoon and went up-river to find the *Northcote* whose doctors and supplies were so badly needed in Saskatoon. He found her on a sandbar 5 miles up-river. On 5 May the *Northcote* arrived and a proper Field Hospital could at last be set up.

On 7 May Middleton marched his men north from Fish Creek and on 9 May the four-day Battle of Batoche began, resulting in Riel's defeat. Middleton had eight men killed and 46 wounded. The Métis lost 51 killed; 173 were wounded. The *Northcote* which had been a battle ship in the fighting at Batoche, now became a hospital ship and conveyed the wounded up to Roddick and Douglas at Saskatoon.

Riel surrendered on 15 May and was brought to Saskatoon on the *Northcote*. Poundmaker surrendered on 25 May. Except for the difficult matter of tracking down Big Bear, the rebellion was over by the end of the month.

At one time the crude hospital at Saskatoon consisting of one schoolhouse, three settlers' houses and a few tents, had some 80 patients including Métis and Indians. By the end of May some of these had recovered, some had died. Those remaining now had to be taken out to Moose Jaw on the CPR where base camp and hospital had been moved from Swift Current.

The first party of 29 wounded left Saskatoon on 21 May on the *Northcote* in the care of Dr. Douglas. Four of his convalescents helped to guard a prisoner on board. He was Louis Riel bound for the Regina jail.

Once the Elbow was reached, travel was by land and no longer easy. Douglas' report to Roddick lists the wounded men and their injuries and then notes:

> I would suggest that no serious cases of wounds should be sent by this route, the journey overland in unsuitable vehicles being too trying. Fortunately, there are only a few cases of this kind in Saskatoon; and when the Hospital is broken up, then they would be sent direct to Winnipeg by the Hudson Bay Co.'s boats as soon as the navigation of Lake Winnipeg can be performed by them.

It is not surprising that Douglas would suggest the hospital travel by water. It was almost a credo with him not to move by land if water were available. His advice was followed; no more wounded came over the Moose Jaw trail. A barge was converted to a floating hospital. Towed by the steamer *Alberta* it carried the wounded down the Saskatchewan to Lake Winnipeg where a lake steamer took them on to Winnipeg. Dr. James Bell, in charge of the wounded, could report afterward that '. . . no one was worse of the trip and many I believe were much better for it.'

The medical service of which Dr. Douglas formed a part, disintegrated at the end of the rebellion and not until 1899 did Canada have a permanent Canadian Militia Medical Department.

Mellis Douglas spent the rest of his life pursuing a dream. As an old military friend put it, 'I do not say it at all in disparagement of his professional ability . . . but he rather relaxed himself over his medical work, and his whole soul was devoted to boats.'

Folding boats were the grand passion on which Douglas pinned all his hopes for the future. In 1889 he had a 17-foot folding skiff built and took it on a 300-mile trip from New York to Boston to publicize folding boats and canoes. In 1893 he made an 800-mile voyage from Collingwood on Georgian Bay to Chicago where he anchored at the Columbian Exhibition and spent two months promoting his boats. Soon afterward Eleanor died and, almost out of money, he took his children to England where he re-joined the army.

In 1894 he entered a race across the English Channel in his folding canoe *The Saskatoon* and came in second. In 1900 he made his last big effort to sell boats at the Paris Exhibition. After Paris, he accepted the fact that his boats would never become profitable, and allowed himself the luxury of just enjoying them.

A man in his sixties now, he could be seen flitting across the English countryside on a folding bicycle with his folding boat tied on behind. At Portsmouth he would unfold his boat, put the folding bicycle into it, and row merrily away to Southampton. Later, from an army post at Perth, he and his folding boat and folding bicycle explored much of Scotland south of the Highlands, as well as Northumberland and the coast from Tay to the Thames. But a frequent complaint in letters to his sons was that the friends he took along would 'become tired'. Like himself, they were doubtless all over 65.

He died on the last day of 1909. In the year before he died, the cyclometer on his bicycle read 4,145 miles. His folding canoe left no record of the miles it had covered. ♦

Dr. Douglas in old age, still paddling his own canoe.

Douglas Family Collection

Journey to the Far North, Summer 1887

PART III: END OF THE TRAIL

THURSDAY — 30th June, 1887

Being now on time according to our programme, we fully intended taking a run to the coast, but all the circumstances being considered, it was decided to give up the idea. The exact distance from the mouth of Peel River to the ocean appears uncertain. The Esquimaux say that they reach the Big Sea on the third day with their boats, so that it must be at least 100 miles. The best maps are very inaccurate in their information about this region. There are several channels leading to the sea and if we wished to go any farther we would have to proceed without a pilot and so incur a certain amount of risk although, with Captain Smith in charge, I do not think there would be very much danger of accident. Another and more important consideration is the fact that the lower part of the Mackenzie is outside the timber line and there was a possibility of the boat running out of wood for fuel. If any accident were happening to the steamer, Mackenzie River District would suffer serious injury if the boat were prevented from returning to Fort Smith in time to take in the year's supplies for the various posts. It was, therefore, decided to start on our return without loss of time so, at six o'clock this morning, just after I had fallen asleep, the steamer got under weigh. The Mackenzie was soon reached and as we are now having the current against us, our rate of progress is necessarily slow. The weather continues beautiful and it is very pleasant steaming along, so long as the mosquitoes do not insist upon us providing entertainment for them.

FRIDAY — 1st July

This has been a quiet day, but in Winnipeg and other cities throughout the Dominion, no doubt, the anniversary of Confederation is being celebrated in a 'whoop-her-up' style. Our culinary artist has honoured the day by preparing a somewhat better spread than usual. The weather still remains lovely but oppressively warm, and as the sun is above the horizon all the time we are having continual light.

SATURDAY — 2nd July

Fort Good Hope was reached this morning at five o'clock, the run up having taken nearly double the time of the downward trip. Five hours were spent at the fort. Chief Trader [C.P.] Gaudet, the officer in charge, who is going out on furlough, takes passage with us and will bear us company as far as Fort Chipewyan. Weather still warm and sultry.

SUNDAY — 3rd July

Arrived at Fort Norman at half past six in the evening and only remained half an hour. After leaving we had service on board conducted by the Reverend Mr. Kirkby (son of Archdeacon Kirkby, for some time at York Factory) who is going from Fort Norman to Fort Simpson. The weather continues fine but exceedingly warm, and as the small staterooms get heated up during the day, it is almost impossible to get a comfortable and refreshing sleep at night.

MONDAY — 4th July

There have been showers of rain all day with an occasional dry moment during which the mosquitoes come on board in clouds. Owing to the closeness of the staterooms I sleep with the door open every night and the screen, which I have over my berth, prevents my being troubled by these pests.

TUESDAY — 5th July

Dropped anchor opposite Fort Wrigley at a quarter past seven in the morning and by eleven o'clock were again under weigh. When an opportunity offers I take advantage to transcribe some of my notes relating to business, but the boat shakes so much from the oscillation of the machinery that it is with difficulty I manage to scribble at all.

FRIDAY — 8th July

Arrived at Fort Simpson at eight o'clock on Wednesday morning and having some time to spare on our programme, we remained at the fort a couple of days, leaving again this morning at ten o'clock. The weather on this visit was beautiful and fortunately there were very few mosquitoes to trouble us.

Last night we had the opportunity of witnessing and taking part in a Mackenzie River ball given to the employees in honour of the Commissioner's visit. About one hundred were present, most of whom were natives. Reels, jigs and other dances common to the country were gone through in a lively manner to the strains of a couple of fiddles. Although the dance was the principal feature of the evening, the ample supper was much appreciated by the dusky portion of the company.

Arthur Robertson, Secretary to Chief Trade Commissioner Joseph Wrigley of the Hudson's Bay Company in Winnipeg, concludes his account of Wrigley's inspection tour of fur trade posts in the Northwest. This portion of the journal covers the return journey to Winnipeg.

Robertson's journal has been published in three parts by permission of his daughter, Mrs. J.S. Hargrave of Vancouver.

As Bishop Bompas expressed a desire to go as far as Fort Smith, he was offered a passage and is now on board. Mr. Camsell also accompanies us still and will travel with us to Winnipeg to be present at the Council of Officers summoned to meet in August.

SATURDAY — 9th July

Fort Providence was reached at half past eleven in the forenoon and a stay of eight hours made. This place is the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church for Mackenzie River. We received an invitation to lunch at the mission which we gladly accepted. Delicious whipped cream and other good things prepared by the skilled hands of the sisters were provided for us. After lunch we visited the native school connected with the mission and were introduced to the Lady Superior and sisters under whose charge it is placed. The children sang some pieces accompanied by the Lady Superior on the harmonium and afterwards one of the pupils read an address of welcome to the Commissioner. When at Chipewyan, the Commissioner and some of the others visited the convent there and the same programme was gone through, barring the lunch. On behalf of the Company the Commissioner made a donation of $50 towards the charitable and self-denying work in which these good people are engaged; the same being done at Edmonton and Chipewyan.

During the time we were on shore, several heavy showers of rain fell, but towards evening the weather cleared up. Tomorrow we expect to leave the Mackenzie and cross Great Slave Lake. From Fort Providence to Peel River the scenery is very fine. At times it is wild and grand. The river runs along the base of stupendous mountains (spurs of the Rockies) which flank its course on the west side and on the east side, lofty snow-covered peaks are often passed. The river varies from a mile to four miles in width, with straight stretches occasionally from 20 to 30 miles in length.

SUNDAY, 10th July

Early this morning the steamer went aground on a shoal when leaving the river and entering Great Slave Lake and she was got off with considerable difficulty, and with the loss of one of the blades of the propeller. With the exception of causing the boat to shake more severely when under weigh, the want of the blade does not seem to give any trouble. In the forenoon we gathered round the capstan in the bow of the boat and the bishop conducted service. The weather was fine for crossing the lake and a good run was had to Fort Resolution, which was reached at three o'clock in the afternoon. The distance from the entrance of the Mackenzie to Fort Resolution across the lake is estimated at 100 miles. Great Slave Lake is about 300 miles in length.

Arthur Robertson dressed for winter sports.

We were disappointed to find that the officer in charge of Fort Rae was not awaiting at Fort Resolution, but the boat from Fort Rae has no doubt been detained by the ice which is still believed to be fast along the north and east shores of the lake. It is impossible to say how long we might have to wait ere the boat arrives so we push on and at half past nine we leave the post and an hour afterwards enter the Great Slave River. At such posts as Fort Rae, which time

would not admit of our visiting, arrangements had been made for the officers in charge to meet us at the most convenient places. In the Mackenzie River District there are posts up the Liard and Nelson Rivers and across the mountains at Peel River which it was impossible for us to visit, yet we saw most of the officers who are in charge of them.

There are six or seven distinct tribes of Indians in the Mackenzie River country; Hare Indians; Mountain Indians; Dogribs; Coppermine; Slavies; Nahanies and Loucheux. The total population (including Esquimaux who number about 400) is about 4,000.

TUESDAY — 12th July

The weather all day yesterday (Monday) was heavy and cloudy with some rain in the afternoon. This morning we arrived at Fort Smith and learned that the *Grahame* awaited us on the other side of the portage. Here we received newspapers up to the 20th June, brought from Winnipeg by Capt. Bell who has just come to take permanent charge of the *Wrigley*.

All through the north we have seen scarcely anything to shoot, the season being too early for the ducks and geese which we are told are to be had for the slaughtering in the months of September and October. As we are not likely to be more fortunate during the remainder of the journey, I thought it well to dispose of my rifle and ammunition at this place.

Our supplies and baggage were sent across the portage in the early part of the day by the oxcarts, and we followed in the afternoon, some riding and others driving. The mosquitoes tormented us dreadfully in crossing and those who were not properly protected with nets were badly bitten.

About ten in the evening the *Grahame* cast off from the landing at Smith Portage and continued to steam all night, although the nights are getting darker as we travel southwards.

WEDNESDAY — 13th July

After a quick run we reached Chipewyan at three in the afternoon and only remained a couple of hours at the fort. Since starting on our return journey from the north, we have been retracing our way over the same course but now we are to take a new route. An hour's run over the lake brings us to the mouth of the Lower Athabasca River and we again proceed upstream.

FRIDAY — 15th July

Yesterday (Thursday) forenoon a heavy rain fell, but the latter part of the day was dry and bright. We were busy all day perusing the newspaper received from Winnipeg, glad to learn something of what had been going on in the outside world during our absence.

At eight o'clock this morning we arrived at Fort McMurray where we lay over for five hours. By

The Right Rev. W.C. Bompas, Bishop of Athabasca, conducted morning service on deck.

ascending the Athabasca for 250 miles farther, we would be brought back to Athabasca Landing, but here we are to branch off and return to Winnipeg by a different route. Leaving the Athabasca we ascend the Clearwater River which, fortunately, is of a sufficient stage of water to permit the *Grahame* taking us up some distance. A large York boat, measuring 36 feet of keel, is being towed alongside for our use when we leave the steamer. For the last two or three years the *Grahame* has not been able to ascend this river on account of the lowness of the water but it is expected she will now be able to take us as far as Sulphur Springs, some seventy miles up.

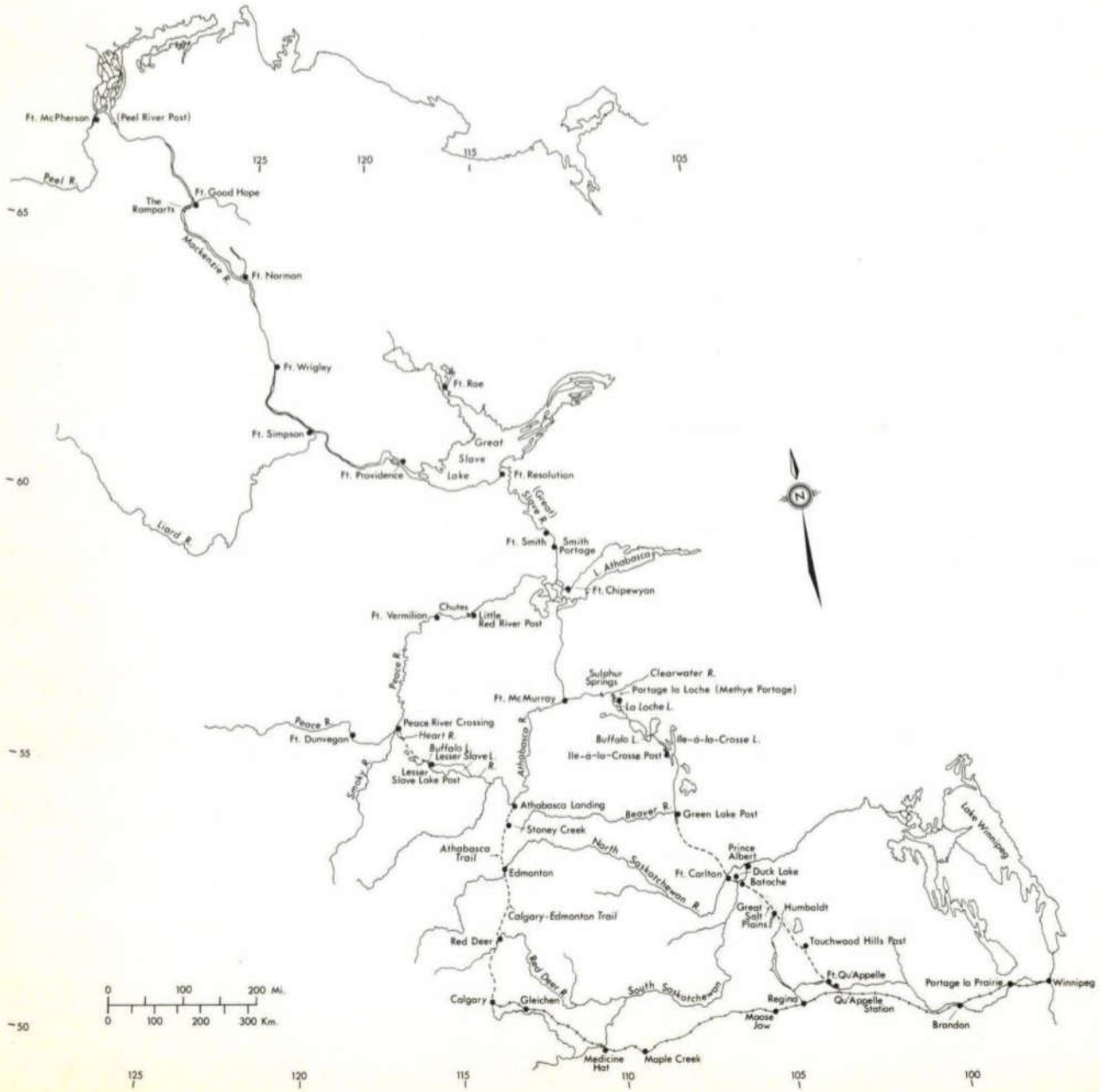
SATURDAY — 16th July

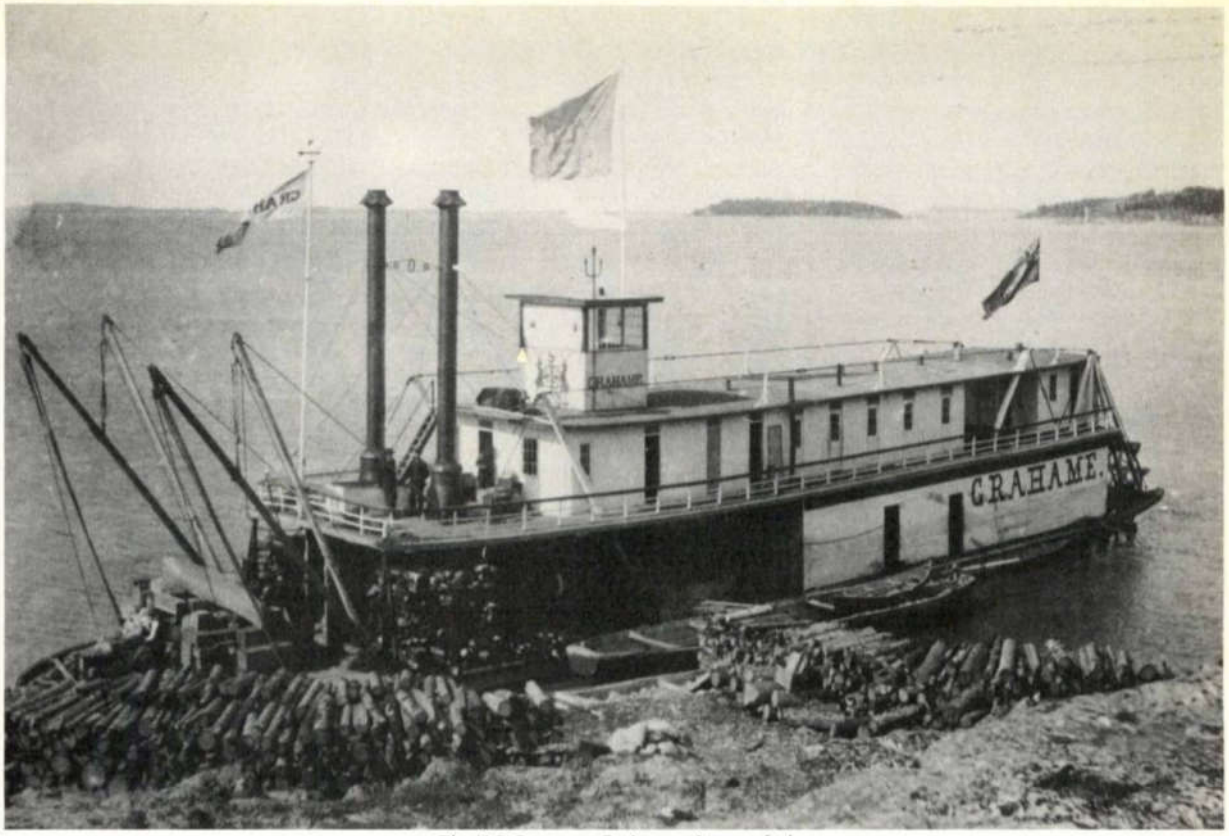
At half past one in the afternoon we reached Sulphur Springs on the Clearwater and as there are rapids in the river which prevent the steamer proceeding further, we had to leave her there. At three o'clock we said good bye to Dr. McKay and other friends on board the boat and accompanied by Mr. McDougall and Mr. Camsell and a crew of twelve men, we pushed off from the *Grahame's* side. As it is feared the time allowed on our programme for the remainder of the journey is too short, we have left behind all the baggage and supplies we could dispense with, taking nothing with us but what is absolutely necessary so as to travel as light as possible. Owing to the numerous rapids and

falls in the river, five portages have to be made before reaching Portage la Loche and to-day, since leaving the steamer, we have got over two of them. In making the portages the packages have to be taken out of the boat so as to lighten her and she is then tracked up the rapids by the crew, while we walk on shore. In the evening the boat is laid alongside the bank as we pitch our tents once more.

SUNDAY — 17th July

A slight thunder storm prevailed during last night but the weather has been fine all day. This has been no 'day of rest', but on the contrary, a day of hard work both for us as well as the crew. The river is a very difficult one to ascend on account of the number of rapids and the men are almost continually in the water with the tracking line. Sometimes, the water reaches above their waists and they are in considerable danger of being swept off their feet, but one man steadies the other and they toil away among the broken water although, at times, the boat hardly moves at all. By two o'clock in the afternoon the last of the portages was reached and the big, heavy boat had to be drawn over this one, a distance of some six hundred yards, as a large fall will not allow her being tracked up the river like the others. The task of getting her across is more than was bargained for and from the time of landing till ten in the evening, both passengers and





The H B C steamer Grahame taking on fuel.

crew, eighteen of us in all, have been at work with block and tackle and she is now only about half way over. I had the misfortune of straining the tendons of my right foot shortly after the boat was got out of the water and so became incapacitated from rendering any further assistance. I have since had to lie propped up on the sacks containing the bedding, with countless numbers of mosquitoes to bear me company and apply to me that ancient mode of treatment, namely, bleeding. Luckily, we have a small medicine chest with us and I am using a linament which will no doubt do good.

MONDAY — 18th July

They were all up by three o'clock this morning and by ten o'clock the boat was launched in the water on the other side of the portage. I had to remain under canvas all morning as the accident to my ankle prevented my moving around.

At eight in the evening the west end of the La Loche Portage was reached where the Clearwater River is left for good. The portage being 13 miles in length, it was decided not to cross till the morning but, to save time, we ascended the steep hill above the landing and camped a couple of miles from the river. A horse was found to carry me up the hill and tomorrow I shall have to manage to reach the other side by the same means.

The scenery on the Clearwater is beautiful and picturesque, more especially so among the rapids on the upper reaches of the river where nature assumes a state of wild grandeur. Here and there the river is broken and momentarily checked on its impetuous course by tree-covered islets which stud the stream, while looming up on either side are steep and precipitous banks of limestone, crowned with the evergreen pine. Looking back from the top of the hill where we camped, we had a magnificent view of the valley and the winding river up which we had come stretching away in the distance. The vegetation along the banks on the lower part of the river is very luxuriant; the slopes are beautifully wooded, flowers of many hues abound and berries of various kinds are plentiful.

TUESDAY — 19th July

An early start was made this morning and the other side of the portage was reached in good time. There were only two riding horses so that most of our party had to walk. The supplies were carted over by oxen. I got along very well on horseback by keeping simply my left foot in the stirrup. The morning was lovely but the flies were a source of torment, both to us and the

animals. Mosquitoes, sand flies, gnats, bulldogs and a horde of other insect life were all out on the warpath.

At the post at the east end of the portage we found Chief Factor [Joseph] Fortescue awaiting us with a York boat and a strong picked crew of eleven men. At one o'clock we placed ourselves under Mr. Fortescue's charge and set on. The wind being fair, we set sail and the La Loche Lake was soon crossed and the La Loche River entered. The latter is a puny stream, certainly not worthy of being called a river as it is so narrow and winding that, at times, the willows on the banks brush the boat on either side and it is so shallow that the men have often to jump out and drag the boat along. It runs through a muskeg, the banks being nearly on a level with the river. In such a place as this the mosquitoes find a congenial home and we accordingly had to suffer for intruding. The slight current is with us and as the river is only 40 miles in length, we shall be out of it tomorrow.

WEDNESDAY — 20th July

About two o'clock this morning rain began to fall and continued until after midday. It was six o'clock before we left camp and the time spent sitting in the open boat from then until the weather cleared up was by no means enjoyable. We have, however, reason to be thankful that throughout the journey we have had such favourable weather, as cold and rain would have made it very unpleasant when travelling the York boats.

At four in the afternoon the La Loche River was left behind and, with a fresh breeze of fair wind, we set sail across Buffalo Lake. The lake is about fifty miles in width and by nightfall we have run 35 miles. The wind has gone down but the men are to carry on all night with the oars in case of a head wind springing up. We try to make ourselves as comfortable as possible under the circumstances for the night, and with our blankets around us endeavour to get a little sleep.

THURSDAY — 21st July

On leaving Buffalo Lake the Deep River was entered and then on into Ile a la Crosse Lake. By occasional spells on the oars and at times taking advantage of a light puff of fair wind, satisfactory progress was made and by two o'clock in the afternoon, the post of Ile a la Crosse was reached. This fort is the headquarters of the English River District and Mr. Fortescue's place of residence. On approaching the fort, the flags were run up and, as at many of the other posts we had visited, we were received with a fusilade from a number of shotguns fired in honour of the commissioner's visit.

We are to remain here until Saturday and even a day or two longer could be spent at this place, as we shall now easily be able to perform what lies before us in the time arranged for by the programme. No advantage can be gained by starting before the time

Hudson's Bay Company

Joseph Fortescue: His hospitality at Ile a la Cross was greatly appreciated.

as, if we reach Green Lake too early, the teams which are to convey us to Carlton will probably not have arrived from Prince Albert. Before setting out from Winnipeg, both officers of the Company and others acquainted with the country, freely expressed the opinion that the journey could not be done in the time allowed, but the way in which the programme has been adhered to speaks well for Hudson's Bay Company organization. The places where difficulties were anticipated are now past and so far as we see, there is nothing to prevent our being in Winnipeg on the 5th August.

SATURDAY — 23rd July

We have enjoyed our stay at Ile a la Crosse very much for which we have to thank Mr. Fortescue and family, who did their utmost to make our visit pleasant. The Commissioner and some of the others visited the Roman Catholic mission and were provided with the same entertainment as at Fort Providence.

Mr. Fortescue had given instructions for a heifer to be killed previous to our arrival and what with roasts, puddings, etc., furnished by this, we lived like fighting

Public Archives of Canada

A late nineteenth century prairie scene, from a wash drawing by Edward Roper (1857-1891).

cocks. After the fare we had been accustomed to, we were able to do justice to the dishes which so often weary us in the city. It is true, from time to time we have been fortunate in receiving supplies of fresh moose meat and dried deer tongues, but nevertheless we were hankering after a joint of roast beef again. When on the Mackenzie we obtained fresh fish occasionally, the principal varieties being a species of salmon peculiar to the river called the econnu, and the Mackenzie River herring, a fish much larger than the salt water herring but very much the same in flavour.

At ten o'clock this morning we took our leave of Mr. Fortescue's family and accompanied by Mr. Fortescue, who goes with us to Winnipeg, we set out with a York boat and a double crew of 18 men. The wind being fair, we sailed across the lake, a distance of six miles at this point and then entered the Beaver River which we have to ascend as far as Green Lake.

TUESDAY — 26th July

With a double crew we were able to make good time, so that by eleven o'clock this forenoon, the north end of Green Lake was reached, having taken about three days to come up the Beaver River. After remaining a few hours at the post we proceeded to the south end of the lake, where the teams to convey us to Carlton were already on hand awaiting us. A heavy shower of rain whilst running up the lake compelled us to seek shelter under the boat cover, but as the distance from one end of the lake to the other is only 18 miles, we reached our destination by eight in the evening and put up for the night in the Company's warehouse as a drenching rain continued to fall. With the exception of the latter part of today, the weather since leaving Ile a la Crosse has been good.

FRIDAY — 29th July

At seven o'clock on Wednesday morning, the weather having cleared up, we drew out from Green Lake on the trail for Carlton, the latter place being distant 150 miles. Forty miles were made the first day on a very rough road, but the wagons were comfortable and it was somewhat a relief to travel once more in this manner after having had to sit cramped up in an open boat for several days. As we proceeded, the road improved and by three o'clock this afternoon the Saskatchewan River at Carlton lay before us.

The country for sixty miles out from Green Lake is mostly wooded but after that, the trail lies through fine rolling land well adapted for cultivation. During the latter part of the journey we drove through several Indian reservations on which magnificent crops were standing nearly ready for harvesting. The weather has been beautiful since leaving Green Lake and the mosquitoes have not troubled us so much as formerly. We have, therefore, enjoyed the drive, notwithstanding the road being a little rough at times.

A couple of hours were employed in ferrying over the teams and baggage to the other side of the Saskatchewan. Being more than two days ahead of time, the teams that were to take us to Batoche had not arrived and as Chief Factor [Lawrence] Clarke of Prince Albert had arranged with the mail contractors for our conveyance to Batoche and from thence to Qu'Appelle, we were in doubt as to what to do. After some deliberation, a man was sent to St. Laurent, the nearest telegraph office, 18 miles distant, to communicate with Prince Albert and see if the arrangements which had been made could be put forward a day or two. In the meantime there is nothing for us but to pitch our camp here, close by the ruins of the fort which was burned at the beginning of the late Rebellion, and await events.

SATURDAY — 30th July

The messenger returned early this morning and reported that he had been unable to communicate with Prince Albert, the telegraph line being out of repair. After consultation it was thought better to proceed to Batoche with the same teams which had brought us from Green Lake and send on a man to Prince Albert, distant 50 miles, to stop the teams coming from there. At eleven o'clock we set out and reached Batoche (19 miles from Carlton) about half past one o'clock, having passed Duck Lake and other spots made memorable in this country's history by the late rising of the half-breeds on the Saskatchewan. The South Saskatchewan was crossed on the ferry and, as expected, the teams had not arrived, as Monday was the day arranged for. We therefore pitched our camp and made up our minds to pass the hours as pleasantly as possible. The tents were put up on the fields of Batoche, the scene of the closing event in the Rebellion.

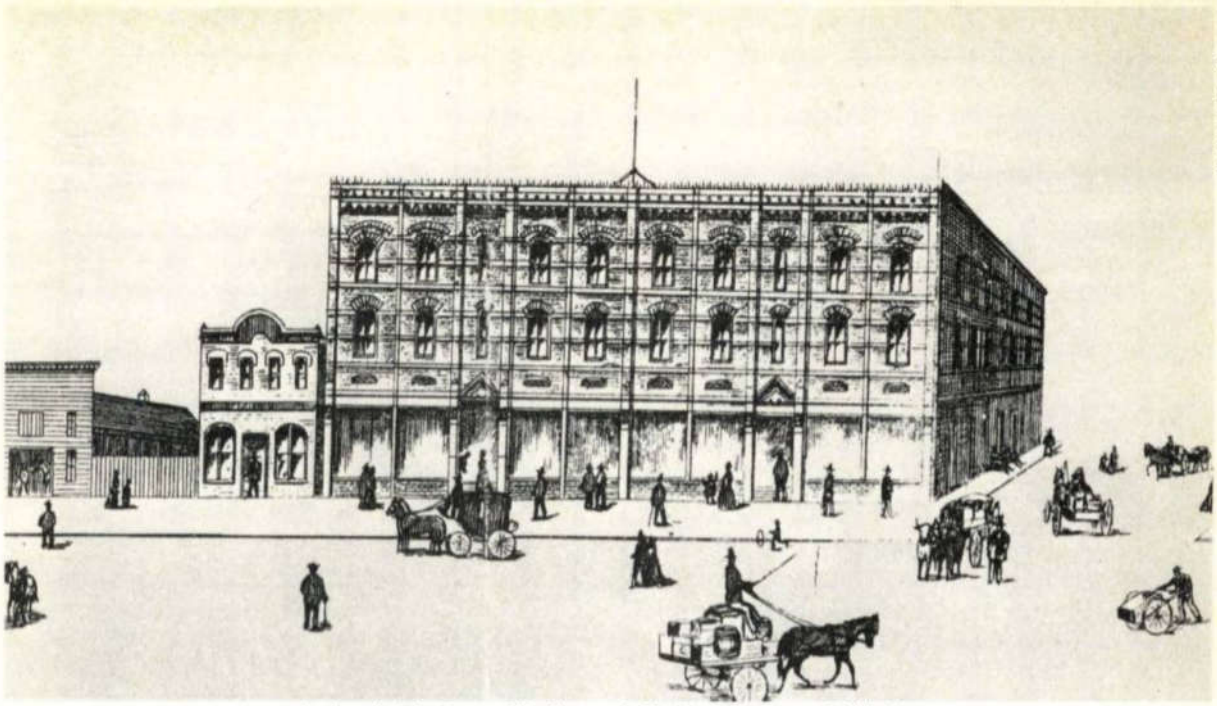
The settlement of Batoche is prettily situated; the country around is well suited for farming and there are a large number of settlers along the banks of the river, most of whom are French half-breeds — those who were in arms during the Rebellion.

SUNDAY — 31st July

Yesterday was a very warm day and today the heat has been oppressive. We spent the time visiting spots around made memorable by the struggle at Batoche. By going through the settlement we were fortunate enough to pick up some Winnipeg papers and we devoured the latest news with much interest.

The H B C Post in the Touchwood Hills visited by the Wrigley party.

Hudson's Bay Company



Hudson's Bay Company

At the end of the journey: The Company's Fur Trade Department in Winnipeg.

Early in the morning Chief Factor Clarke of Prince Albert arrived, having come from Carlton where, on his arrival, he had learned of our having gone on to Batoche. He informed us that the teams had left Prince Albert and would probably reach Batoche this afternoon. However, they did not arrive until the evening and although it was late, the man in charge was anxious to travel as far as possible during the night as he intended to try and run us through to Qu'Appelle to catch the train which leaves there on Tuesday night. About nine o'clock, we got on the road and drove until two o'clock on Monday morning.

MONDAY — 1st August

After a rest of two and a half hours, which was meant more for the horses than for us, we again got under way. After being an hour on the road, a severe thunder storm burst forth and the rain fell in torrents for several hours. The trail, which was in good condition when dry, now became heavy and difficult to travel and but slow time was made for the remainder of the day. In the afternoon we realized that at our rate of speed, it was impossible to make Qu'Appelle in time to catch the Tuesday night's train and as there is not another train until Thursday, we made up our minds to take it easy and stay over for a day at Fort Qu'Appelle, distant some 18 miles from the station.

About 35 miles from Batoche we entered upon the salt plain, an arid waste incapable of cultivation and where it is impossible to get any water fit for use. A supply of water had, accordingly, to be carried in a small cask. This uninviting tract of country extends for nearly 70 miles and in a warm, blazing sun, the drive across the plain is by no means pleasant.

WEDNESDAY — 3rd August

Last night, we arrived at the Company's post at Touchwood Hills, and as the intense heat, which had prevailed all day, had culminated in a thunder storm, we were glad to take refuge in the houses, rather than pitch our tents.

At half past five this afternoon, we arrived at Fort Qu'Appelle and intend remaining here until tomorrow night.

FRIDAY — 5th August

At one o'clock this morning we caught the eastbound train at Qu'Appelle station and reached Winnipeg at ten minutes past five in the afternoon — the day arranged for our return some months previous — having performed a journey of over 6,000 miles with a varied means of locomotion through a country comprising boundless plains, dense illimitable forests and vast water stretches.

Signed: ARTHUR ROBERTSON
1st December, 1887.

HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE,
WINNIPEG. ♦

After an expensive false start, the Canadian government called in a British expert to advise on the Hudson Bay Railway. Should the line end at Port Nelson or at Churchill?

ON TO THE BAY

By William Barr

ON A MAP THE ROUTE of the Hudson Bay Railway takes a marked change of direction just to the east of Gillam, abandoning the northeastward trend which it has been pursuing parallel to the Nelson River, to slice straight north across the muskeg and tundra towards Churchill. The view from the air is even more intriguing: from that anomalous bend an abandoned right-of-way, albeit somewhat disturbed by thermokarst subsidence and washouts, can still be clearly distinguished, continuing steadfastly on its northeastward course. And where that old right-of-way finally swings down to the shore of the Nelson estuary there stands one of the most bizarre structures in the Canadian North. A seventeen-span steel bridge, some 1.2 kilometres in length, strides out from the shore through the silt-laden waters of the Nelson estuary to what is clearly the remnants of an artificial island.

The bridge and island at Port Nelson represent a memorial to a little-known phase in the history of the Hudson Bay Railway, and to a specific decision taken with regard to that railway over half a century ago. During an election speech on 18 September 1908 at Niagara Falls Sir Wilfrid Laurier, with an eye to western votes, made a firm commitment that his Liberal government (if elected) would definitely build a railway to Hudson Bay; in this he was promising the fulfillment of a western dream which had been nurtured for decades. A branch line had already been completed from Hudson Bay Junction to The Pas by the Canadian Northern Railway in 1908, and the intent now was to carry the new line north from there.

The following year five survey parties were in the field, examining the route from The Pas to Hudson Bay and in September 1909 John Armstrong, the engineer in charge of these parties, submitted his report. He stated his firm belief that in nearly every respect Churchill was inferior to Port Nelson as the site of the terminus of the railway. In his view one of the critical arguments against Churchill was that dock construction would necessitate blasting solid rock and, of course, it would necessitate some 140 kilometres of additional track, crossing muskeg and tundra, which would pose novel and unknown construction problems.

Over the next few years, actual progress on construction of the line was painfully slow. By the start of the 1913 construction season the tangible progress amounted to a partly finished bridge across the Saskatchewan at The Pas, 80 kilometres of completed grade without rails beyond that, and a further 30 kilometres of cleared right-of-way. Nonetheless the decision as to which of the possible alternate sites for the terminal should be selected, Churchill or Nelson, could no longer be postponed. The Honourable Frank Cochrane, Minister of Railways and Canals in Borden's new Conservative cabinet, had visited both sites in the fall of 1912 and by the spring of 1913 had decided that Port Nelson was the superior site.

That summer and for the following four seasons Port Nelson became one of the largest and busiest settlements in Northern Canada. Since steel would not reach

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Building the Hudson Bay Railway, 1914.

the site for a number of years, building of the terminal necessitated a massive sea-lift operation. A fleet of ships, some of them making several trips per season from Halifax or the St Lawrence, transported hundreds of men and vast amounts of supplies and equipment to the site. During that first summer the steamer *Bellaventure* towed a massive suction dredge, *Port Nelson*, from Sydney, Cape Breton, through Hudson Straits and across the Bay to the site.

Initially a series of conventional piers had been envisaged, extending out at right angles from the shore. But by the fall of 1913 it had become patently obvious that the site was subject to rapid silting and that this conventional port design would involve constant, expensive dredging. The ingenious alternate solution adopted by Donald McLachlan, the engineer in charge, was to build an artificial island well out in the estuary, where the scour of the tides and the river current around the island would naturally keep the berths alongside the quays clear of silt. This island, which was to accommodate the grain elevators, was linked to the mainland by the impressive steel bridge already mentioned. Construction of this bridge absorbed much of the time, money and effort at Port Nelson over the next few years.

As construction proceeded the demands of the war effort, which gradually permeated every aspect of Canada's economy, progressively reduced the urgency of the Port Nelson project. Finally, following some very unenthusiastic comments in the assessment made by the Railway Inquiry Commission of 1916-1917, by the end of the 1917 season the massive project ground to a halt. When the Kettle Rapids bridge across the Nelson was completed during the following winter, work on the railway was also discontinued. From here the grade was complete (although no steel had been laid) all the way to Port Nelson, where the brand new bridge marched bravely out to an island without a purpose. As of the end of the fiscal year, 31 March 1918, the Hudson Bay Railway had cost the Canadian taxpayer $13,890,387.87 and the Port Nelson terminal in its incomplete form, $6,343,499.50.

Port Nelson languished in this incomplete state for a decade, although in the interim there were several significant developments. In 1918 F.H. Kitto of the Department of the Interior visited both Nelson and Churchill and in his published report indicated that Churchill was by far the superior harbour in rough weather. The following year a Senate Committee, after assembling a mass of evidence from 21 competent witnesses, decided that:

> . . . in the opinion of this Committee sufficient care was not taken in the selection of Nelson as the terminus of the railway and . . . the government should not make further important expenditures upon the port without first making a new and thorough exam-

ination into the relative merits of Churchill and Nelson as a terminus for the railroad.

Despite continued western pressure there was no immediate action taken to renew work on the railroad. The most significant expression of the growing pressure was the formation of the 'On-to-the-Bay' Association in April 1924 in Winnipeg; it mounted a vigorous campaign over the next few years. Finally in 1926 Mackenzie King's government committed itself to completion of the Hudson Bay Railway.

In view of the money already expended on Port Nelson the decision as to which of the two possible terminals was the more suitable was clearly a sensitive one politically. Hence when the Minister of Railways and Canals, the Honourable Charles A. Dunning, finally decided in the fall of 1926 to make a 'new and thorough examination', he followed the politically expedient course of engaging the services of a reputable and disinterested outside expert. That expert was the British engineer, Sir Frederick Palmer.

Over a year later, when Senator Tanner asked on 2 April 1928 whether the government had been unable to find a Canadian engineer equally well qualified for the work, the following response was recorded in the Senate Debates on 17 April:

> As was disclosed by the special Committee of the Senate which went into the matter, the question of the relative merits of Churchill and Nelson was highly controversial, and in respect to which very pronounced differences existed among Canadian engineers and public officials. It was considered advisable, therefore, to secure the services of an unquestioned authority on port development, who could not be charged with undue interest or prejudice by partizans of either port. Mr. Palmer is . . . undoubtedly the best qualified engineer for the purpose for which he was engaged.

Having received his early training on the Great Western Railway in England, Sir Frederick had been chief engineer with the East India Railway between 1884 and 1901; during this time his major achievement was the building of what is still the longest bridge in India, over the River Son. From 1901 until 1909 he had been chief engineer to the Calcutta Port Commissioners, then from 1909 until 1913, chief engineer to the Port of London Authority. In 1927 Sir Frederick, head of the engineering firm of Rendel, Palmer and Tritton, was president of the British Institute of

Piers on the unfinished bridge at the Limestone River, 1927.

Arctic Institute

Arctic Institute

Sir Frederick Palmer's party encamped in Northern Manitoba, 1927.

Civil Engineers, and also consulting engineer to the ports of both London and Glasgow. Most recently he had completed a study of Takoradi Bay in Ghana with a view to possible harbour developments.

Sir Frederick appears to have accepted the Hudson Bay Railway contract at a meeting with the Honourable P.C. Larkin, High Commissioner for Canada in London, on 15 November 1926. The plan of action was that Sir Frederick, accompanied by his chief assistant, E.J. Buckton, should visit Ottawa in December to study all the available reports and blueprints on Port Nelson and Churchill. On a second visit in August 1927 they would visit both sites. Sir Frederick's fee was seven thousand guineas (£7,250 or approximately $36,250), 'in addition to the salary of my Chief Assistant at fifty pounds per week and all out-of-pocket expenses, both to be calculated as from the departure for, and return from, both visits.'

Sir Frederick and Buckton sailed from Southampton on board the *Olympic* on 15 December 1926 and reached New York on the 21st. They arrived in Ottawa at midday on the 22nd. Having established themselves in the Chateau Laurier the two men settled down to work over the festive season, digesting the vast amount of available engineering data on Port Nelson and the much smaller amount of data on Churchill. Sir Frederick did find time, however, to address the Ottawa Branch of the Engineering Institute of Canada at a luncheon meeting on 29 December.

Writing to Dunning from the Chateau Laurier on 30 December 1926, Sir Frederick called attention

> to the fact that there was a complete absence of engineering data at the time when a decision was arrived at to locate the Port at Nelson.
>
> It is very desirable that this mistake shall not be repeated when reconsidering that decision. During the progress of works at Nelson a great deal of information has been obtained from time to time, but in regard to Churchill, the position today is that there is absolutely no data on which anything approaching a reliable estimate of cost can be formulated. I have, therefore, given Colonel Dubuc, Chief Engineer with the Department of Railways and Canals, a memorandum (copy enclosed) in regard to borings, trial pits, etc., information regarding which must be in my hands before a scheme can be prepared.

This seemingly innocuous request provoked a remarkable flurry of activity in the North over the next few months. Even before Sir Frederick sailed again

from New York aboard the *Majestic* on 1 January 1927, the first survey party was on its way to Northern Manitoba to start gathering the information he asked for. On 9 January a survey team led by engineer J.L. Charles set off northwards from Mile 360 on the Hudson Bay Railway, heading for Churchill some 250 kilometres away. The general route they followed was largely dictated by the deposition made by the brothers J.B. and J.W. Tyrrell, both expert northern geologists, to the Senate Committee in 1920. They had asserted that by striking off from the line of the Hudson Bay Railway some 80 kilometres short of Port Nelson a route could be found to Churchill which would pose no insuperable engineering problems. Using dog teams, Charles and his men worked steadily north through January, February and March — the depth of the subarctic winter — despite the problems of limited daylight, bitter cold and blizzards. The lowest temperature recorded, at the Weir River on 19 January was −52°F, accompanied by a strong wind. By 14 April they had completed their survey and were back at the end of steel at the Limestone River.

Immediately on his return to Winnipeg on 16 April 1927, Charles submitted his report, complete with such estimates as the amounts of material which would have to be excavated and the availability of gravel. On this basis on 28 April the Canadian National Railway's chief engineer, C.S. Gzowski drew up a memorandum of the cost of building the extension of the line to Churchill, as compared to refurbishing the line to Nelson. Both reports were forwarded to Sir Frederick by the Honourable Charles Dunning on 4 June with the comment: 'It is of interest to find that the engineers are of opinion that it would be no more difficult to build and maintain a line to Churchill than has been experienced in the construction of other parts of the Hudson Bay Railway'.

During April steps had also been taken to comply with Sir Frederick's request for engineering data on the Churchill port site. Given the time constraints it was decided that the engineering crew would have to be airlifted to Churchill.

The contract for the airlift was allocated to a private company, Western Canada Airways, which was operating a number of Fokker Universals out of Hudson, Ontario, in connection with the gold-rush which was underway in that area. In charge of the airlift operation was Captain Rod Ross, superintendent for Western Canada Airways; the two pilots were Captain F.J. Stevenson and Bernt Balchen, who was later to become renowned as a polar aviator. At this time he was a test pilot with Fokker Aircraft and was in Hudson on a trouble-shooting mission.

The two planes, named *City of Winnipeg* and *City of Toronto* took off from Hudson on the morning of 20 March 1927. They flew via Berens River, stopped overnight at Norway House for rest and fuel, and next day landed at Cache Lake, at Mile 321 near the end of steel, where an engineer and 10 men were waiting with a small mountain of equipment to be airlifted to Churchill. The major items were a churn well drill capable of drilling an 11.25 centimetre hole to a depth of 30 metres, and a wash boring outfit with a drilling capacity of 22 metres. The total load, including camping equipment, provisions and men came to around five tonnes.

For the next two weeks the two planes shuttled to and fro between Cache Lake and Fort Churchill, making a total of 27 round trips. On one occasion Bernt Balchen made a side trip to deliver mail to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police post at Eskimo Point, almost certainly the first time any aircraft had flown in the Keewatin. By 17 April the entire drilling crew was in Churchill and the test drilling had begun. Towards the end of that month, with the melt well under way and with the surface of Cache Lake almost completely covered with melt pools, the two Fokker aircraft made a spectacular take-off with sheets of water and spray flying out from their skis, and headed south, their task complete.

Sir Frederick Palmer and his assistant sailed from Southampton again aboard the *Olympic* on 20 July. On reaching New York they transferred to a private rail car, put at their disposal by Major G.A. Bell, Deputy Minister of Railways and Canals; travelling in style they reached Ottawa at 1 o'clock on the 27th. Here the party for the inspection trip to Nelson and Churchill was assembled. Apart from Sir Frederick and Buckton, it consisted of the Minister of Railways and Canals, the Honourable Charles Dunning; the deputy minister, Major Graham A. Bell; Colonel A.E. Dubuc, chief engineer for the department; Mr D.W. McLachlan, the department's engineer who had built the terminal at Nelson a decade and more earlier; General R.W. Paterson, president of the 'On-to-the-Bay' Association; C.S. Gzowski, chief engineer of the Canadian National Railway; and a further four members, L. Wilson, R. Yuill, R. Delisle and Mr Parsons, who were presumably journalists.

Their train left Ottawa in the early hours of 28 July. The following evening they transferred to a special train waiting at Winnipeg and by 11:45 A.M. on 31 July they had reached the end of steel at Mile 352 on the Hudson Bay Railway, where the unfinished piers for the railway bridge strode across the Limestone River. Having eaten lunch on the train, the party walked across the river on a temporary footbridge, then along the railway grade for some 3 kilometres to a point on the Nelson River where six canoes with Indian paddlers were waiting for them. At 2:40 P.M. the little flotilla pushed off, heading downstream; running the Little Limestone Rapids must have caused some

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Members of the Palmer party inspect Fort Prince of Wales and cope with mosquitoes. From left to right: Major G.A. Bell, Charles Dunning, Col. A.E. Dubuc, Sir Frederick Palmer, D.W. McLachlan.

excitement for this distinguished company. By 5:30 the canoes had reached the head of navigation on the Nelson and here camp was pitched for the night on an island named Palmer Island for the occasion.

Early next morning the party embarked in two motors boats for the run downriver to Port Nelson, distance of some 100 kilometres. At Flamborough Head they had to wait for an hour for the tide to turn before completing the trip. The boats reached Port Nelson shortly after noon on 1 August and the party spent the remainder of the day and the following morning inspecting the bridge, the artificial island and the various buildings and items of equipment still lying at Port Nelson. They then boarded the tug *George W. Yates* — which had been lying here since 1917 but which had been spruced up and overhauled for the occasion — and sailed for Churchill.

George W. Yates sailed in through the entrance of Churchill harbour and dropped anchor at 8:45 next morning. Having been rowed ashore Sir Frederick and his party spent the day inspecting the progress of the test boring operations. Next day (4 August) the entire group played the role of tourists. Travelling in a whaleboat made available by the Hudson's Bay Company post, they visited the trading post, Sloop Cove, and the ruins of Prince of Wales's Fort on the west side of the river mouth. There they were greatly impressed by the heavy seas breaking on the seaward side of the headland, as compared to the calm waters inside the river mouth. Although it was a pleasant summer's day the mosquitoes were troublesome and the members of the party had to don headnets and swathe themselves in practically all their available clothing.

Two days later, having thoroughly inspected the entire proposed site of the terminal and having consulted at length with the engineer in charge of the test borings, Sir Frederick and his party boarded the *George W. Yates* once again. They sailed from Churchill on the evening of the 6th, and at 11 o'clock next morning dropped anchor off Nelson Shoals in thick fog. There they waited about an hour before visibility improved enough that the pilot could get his bearings for the run up the difficult, narrow channel to Port Nelson. Even then, having almost reached the port, the tug had to wait a further two and a half hours for the tide to rise so that she could reach the wharf.

Even at this early stage Sir Frederick had reached his decision. On 10 August, before leaving Nelson he

made a statement which appeared in the Toronto *Globe* the following day:

> I shall recommend Churchill to the Government as the Hudson Bay port. It is a natural harbor, in which practically unlimited shipping accommodations can be provided in the shortest time and at a minimum of cost.
>
> The borings recently taken over an extensive area show easily dredged material and no rock within 50 feet of low water level. It is almost incomparably superior to Nelson in safety, cost of construction and economy of time. It is accessible for 30-foot vessels at all stages of the tide, whereas Nelson can only be made available by extensive dredging for 26-foot vessels over periods averaging three hours each twice in every 24 hours of the shipping season.
>
> A preliminary report will be submitted during August, to be followed by a detailed report dealing with the questions placed before me by Mr Dunning last January.

Asked for his comments General Paterson remarked that he was fully in accord with Palmer's decision.

Perhaps most surprising at this early stage, long before the official report had been submitted, or even written, was Dunning's reaction to Sir Frederick's decision, as expressed to the reporters at Port Nelson, and published in newspapers across the country the following day:

> The government will act immediately on Mr. Palmer's recommendations. I have had the opportunity of going over every engineering fact regarding Nelson and Churchill with the aid of the best engineering advice obtainable and feel sure the detailed report will carry conviction to all as to the wisdom of the course proposed. The Department will proceed at once to push forward work at Churchill from the sea end and the Canadian National Railways, acting for the Department, will complete construction of the remaining railroad link as speedily as possible . . .
>
> Nature has given us a wonderful harbor at Churchill and it is the policy of the Government to develop and make use of the whole Hudson Bay route as quickly as possible.

On the morning of 10 August the motor boats started upriver; once again the party camped on Palmer Island and the following day the canoes started off upstream. With the Indian canoemen paddling against the current and tracking the canoes up the Little Limestone Rapids, it took them over 10 hours to cover the distance which had taken only three hours on the outward trip. At the lunch stop at Little Limestone Rapids the obligatory group photos were taken. At 6:40 P.M. they reached the train waiting for them at the end of steel and one can imagine that the gentlemen would indulge

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Sir Frederick points the way to his assistant, E.J. Buckton, Churchill, 1927.

in the luxury of a hot bath or shower before assembling in the bar and the dining car to enjoy the delights of civilization again as the train rumbled south over the muskeg. It reached Winnipeg at 7.20 A.M. on 13 August and most members of the party were probably back in Ottawa in a few days.

Sir Frederick no doubt took a little time to enjoy the pleasures of Ottawa but he clearly spent time at his desk in his suite in the Chateau Laurier. In keeping with his promise made at Port Nelson, on 24 August he submitted his preliminiary report to Dunning. The conclusions were:

> 1. That Churchill is undoubtedly the Port to be selected as affording a real harbour in which shipping facilities can be provided in calm water protected from all storms by the surrounding rocky cliffs.
>
> 2. The estimated costs of corresponding accommodation at Nelson and Churchill disclose marked advantage in favour of the latter, the figures showing that, including interest during the period of con-

A modern hiker passes the abandoned Nelson River bridge.

struction, the cost at Churchill will be less than one-third of what is required to complete Nelson. Even after adding the cost of the extra 87 miles of railway to Churchill, the cost at this place will be only about one-half of the Nelson port estimate.

3. The time for the completion of the works at Churchill, viz., 3 years, is one-half of the time needed to carry out the Nelson works.

4. That Churchill provides a completely sheltered port for shipping from the moment the entrance is passed, while at Nelson no shelter can be confidently reckoned upon until the wharf is reached, and then only by the provision of breakwaters.

5. That the annual charges, including interest, operation and maintenance would be about a million dollars greater at Nelson than at Churchill.

6. That at both Nelson and Churchill the sites admit of considerable extensions, but at much less cost at Churchill than at Nelson. The wharf, either in its initial or extended stage, would at Nelson be governed by the limiting nature of its approach, to vessels of 26 feet draught during a brief period around high water at neap tides unless much increased expenditure is incurred in dredging. It is limited to a draught of 28 feet even after this dredging is done unless still further expenditure of a prohibitive character is undertaken. At Churchill the accommodation proposed will, in the 'initial development,' admit of 28 feet draught vessels during the 24 hours of each day while for extensions there is no practical limit to the draught of vessels which can be provided for.

7. The evidence regarding ice conditions at both ports is vague and inconclusive and no satisfactory reliable decision can be given in regard thereto . . . it is impossible to say that either port is open to ocean-going steamers for a longer or shorter period than the other.

Following upon these conclusions, it is strongly recommended that Churchill be made the port terminal for the Hudson Bay Railway because it affords by far the best possible opportunity for the development of trade through the Bay.

Having embarked on the *Empress of Australia* at Quebec on 31 August Sir Frederick and Buckton were back in London within the week. On 30 November Sir Frederick wrote to Dunning enclosing copies of his final report. Among the batch were signed copies for

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Col. A.E. Dubuc and Charles Dunning watch heavy seas breaking at Fort Prince of Wales.

The bridge at Port Nelson as seen from the man-made island, looking toward shore.

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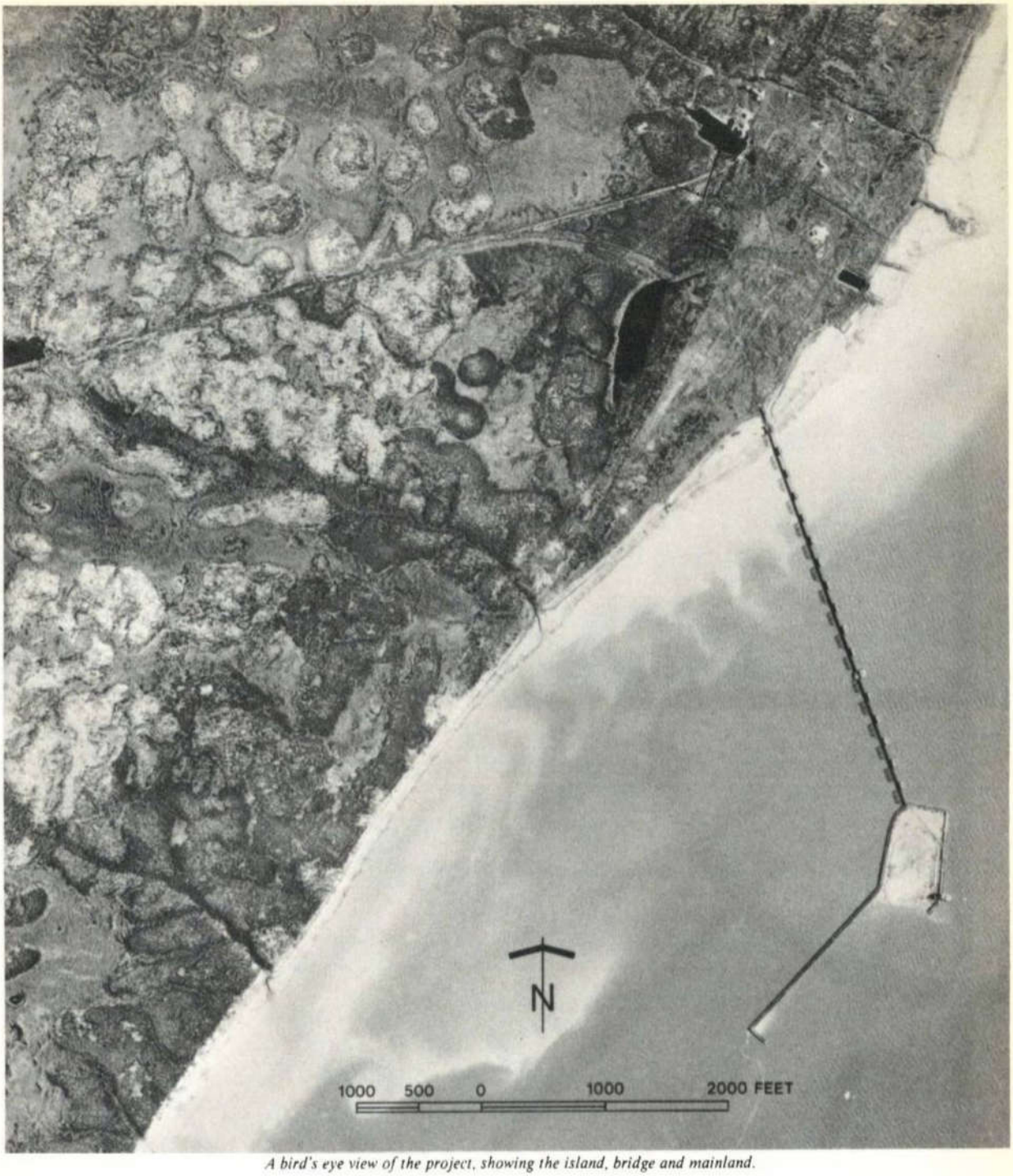


A bird's eye view of the project, showing the island, bridge and mainland.

himself and for the Prime Minister. This final report was dated October 1927. As one might expect it reiterates the conclusions reached in the preliminary report and summarizes every aspect in a detailed table which compares the two potential terminal sites. Sir Frederick concludes:

> A study of the above Table of Comparison cannot but lead to the conclusion that Churchill is in every aspect save one — the extra cost and annual charges imposed for all time by 87 additional miles of railway — in every other respect, incomparably superior to Nelson. In fact, so marked were the advantages, as shown by drawings and charts and by a careful examination of all the data available, that it was felt there must be some other and overwhelming reason for the selection of Nelson.
>
> It had been stated, more than once, that at Churchill, the area of land available for terminal development was very restricted and expensive to improve; that the area available for docks was very small and, to increase this area, the basin would practically all have to be dredged out; and every indication that this dredging would have to be in solid rock. The investigations, however, made in the spring of this year as to the nature of the harbour bed, and the inspection of the site in August last showed, beyond doubt, how misleading, how unfounded, were these statements. The land area in the immediate neighbourhood of the proposed wharf is far in excess of any probable requirements and can be developed at relatively little cost; the area available for docks is practically unlimited and the dredging of the basin involves no large expenditure; while the bogey of 'solid rock' is completely dispelled by the borings recently put down . . .
>
> The foregoing report is believed to have dealt with all determinable questions of a relevant nature. Notwithstanding the predisposition of the Government towards Nelson, the facts concerning physical conditions, the estimates of cost and the time required for construction are overwhelmingly in favour of the selection of Churchill as the terminal port for the Hudson Bay Railway, and it is recommended that the works commenced at Port Nelson should not be proceeded with, and that Churchill should be selected for the Hudson Bay Port.

Sir Frederick submitted his itemized bill on 13 February 1928; including the preparation of his report it came to nine thousand four hundred and twenty five pounds, fourteen shillings and five pence, or approximately $47,128. Payment was approved by the Privy Council on 22 March. On 4 May 1928 Sir Frederick wrote personal notes both to Larkin, High Commissioner for Canada and to Dunning to express his sincere thanks to all involved in the field surveys and in every aspect of his trip. He remarked: 'The investigations in Canada were of a very strenuous character, but I received so much help and cordial co-operation from all concerned that the work became an extremely pleasant duty.'

Long before this date, in keeping with the promises Dunning had made at Port Nelson, work had started towards implementing Sir Frederick's decision. In a memo dated 9 September 1927 Colonel A.E. Dubuc, the department's chief engineer reported that Dunning had already given orders 'that immediate steps be taken to hurry the transfer of whatever plant, equipment and supplies could be saved from Nelson to Churchill and to make preparations necessary for an early start in dredging and construction work next spring.' In point of fact some 200 men, led by resident engineer George Kydd, and consisting of ship's carpenters, mechanics, blacksmiths, marine engineers, boiler makers and labourers had already been at work for some two weeks at Nelson, reconditioning the floating plant, dismantling buildings and generally making ready for the transfer to Churchill. The steamer *Canadian Raider* sailed from Halifax on 9 September with some 4,000 tonnes of coal and supplies for Churchill. Two days later the dipper dredge *Kennequhair* and a steel dump scow left Halifax in tow of the tugs *Ocean Eagle* and *St. Anne*, also bound for Churchill. In command was the veteran arctic navigator, Captain J.E. Bernier.

The final outcome was that by 13 September 1929 through the efforts of C.S. Gzowski, the railway was completed and operational all the way to Churchill; a few days later a token shipment of 1,800 lbs of wheat samples was shipped aboard S.S. *Ungava*, bound for England. In September 1931 Dalgleish Company's steamer *Farnworth* loaded the first commercial cargo of wheat at the Churchill terminal.

Perhaps the most interesting angle from which to consider Sir Frederick's contribution to the building of the Hudson Bay Railway, is in terms of a comparison with parallel present-day decision-making processes. This critical decision cost a total of $47,128 (excluding the cost of the route survey and the borings at Churchill). From the first communication from the Canadian Government until the final report appeared, the elapsed time was only a few days over one year. In the present era of environmental activist groups and environmental impact studies one wonders what this same decision would cost and how long it would take if it had to be tackled now. And equally interesting, would the decision be the same? ♦

Over the Tundra to Wilberforce Falls

By Richard Harrington

THE WILBERFORCE FALLS on the Hood River are the highest in the Canadian Arctic. At 50 metres (160 feet) they are almost the height of Niagara, though the volume of water is much less.

Only a handful of people have seen these falls. They foam and crash in their rugged setting in remote, almost inaccessible country, some 60 kilometres northeast of Yellowknife, and about 15 kilometres west of Bathurst Inlet.

In 1821 Sir John Franklin and his group became the first white men to view the falls. His party included Surgeon John Richardson, some Indian hunters, French-Canadian canoemen, and two midshipmen, Robert Hood and George Back — both skilled amateur artists.

As the party returned from mapping the Arctic coastline, they came upon a swift little river flowing from the southwest, the direction they wished to pursue. Franklin named it Hood for his 'middy' who died on the return journey to Fort Enterprise near Great Slave Lake.

The Hood River came into Arctic Sound off Bathurst Inlet, running through flat country, and over ledges between bold hills. They camped at a small cascade, where a hunter shot a caribou, the last meat the group had for weeks.

Reading Franklin's *Narrative* in comfort at Bathurst Inlet Lodge, I became fascinated with the idea of seeing the river and the great cataract that Franklin described.

He wrote, 'I have named these magnificent cascades "Wilberforce Falls", as a tribute of my respect for that distinguished philanthropist and christian.' (William Wilberforce, [1759-1833] was a vigorous opponent of the slave trade and of England's labour ethics.)

In 1983, my host at the Bathurst Inlet Lodge, Glenn Warner, flew me over the deep canyon in his Cessna 185. It was only a tantalizing glimpse of the falls — a second or two, and fogged with spray. There was then no thought of a landing.

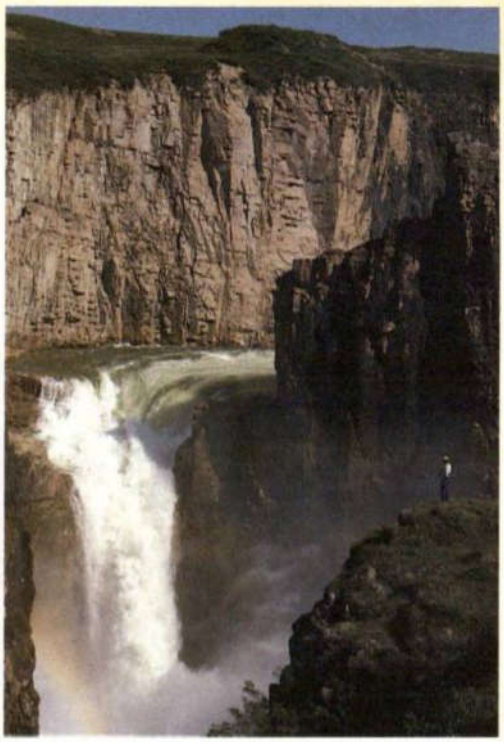
But on a return visit in 1984, we once again flew over the countryside around the falls. Glenn spotted a small unnamed lake, five or six kilometres west of the river where he could land his float plane safely and, equally important, take off again. It was only about 50 kilometres from the lodge.

After a few days of changeable weather, a day dawned sunny and favourable, late in July. Sheila Chapman, an outdoors enthusiast from Yellowknife, was also eager to visit the falls. We loaded our sleeping bags, tent and food into the plane. Twenty minutes later we splashed down and waded ashore.

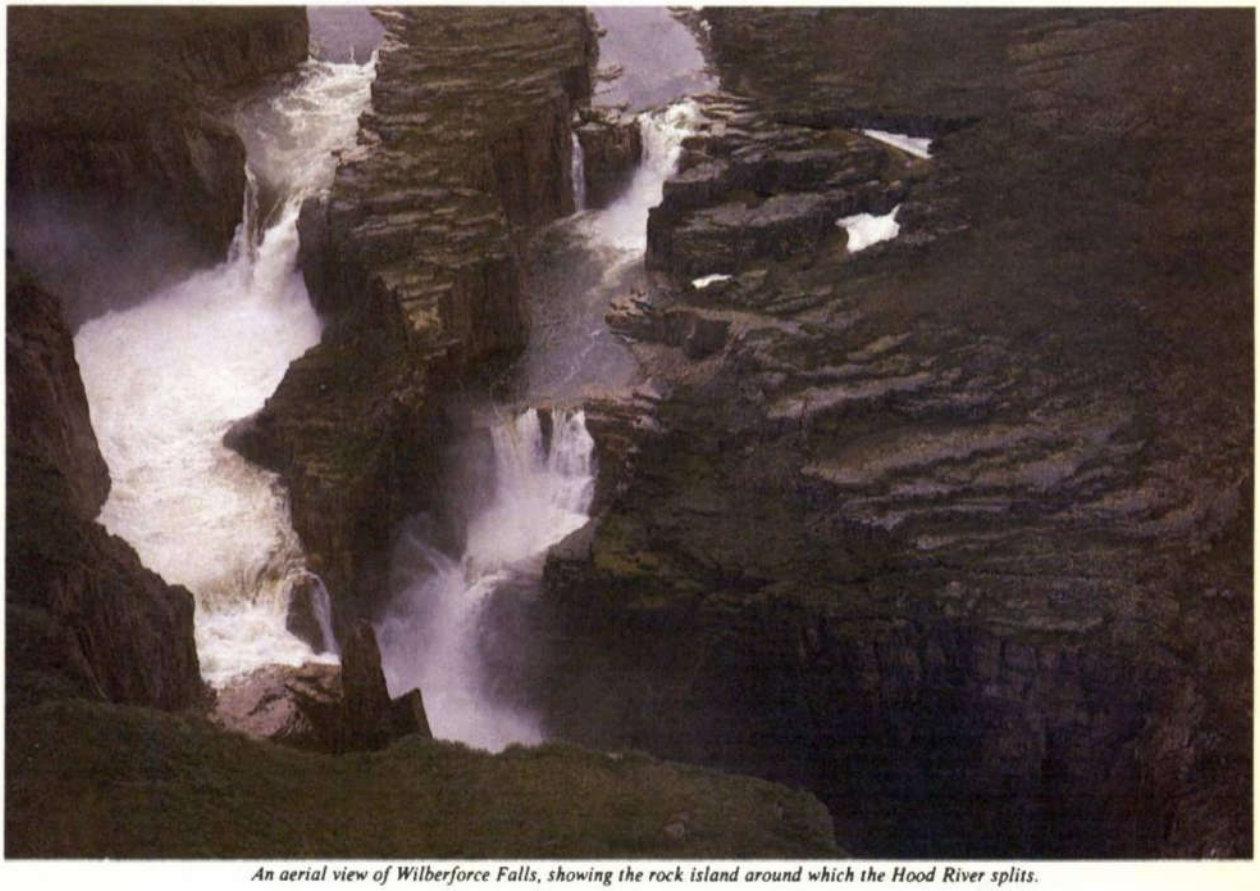
Glenn tossed out a large orange tarpaulin, about four metres square, to spread in case of emergency. Happily, we didn't use it.

From the air we had observed the general direction of the falls. Now we shouldered our packsacks and struck off across the tundra on a gentle rise, full of anticipation. The terrain was rock-strewn with large boulders. Here and there we skirted muskeg bogs. We could see the curve of the river above the falls, studded with big boulders, and much too deep and swift to be waded.

The Wilberforce Falls thunder in lonely magnificence in their isolated setting. The second drop of the falls is about 100 feet.



An onlooker feels the spray as the falls shoot into a deep canyon.



An aerial view of Wilberforce Falls, showing the rock island around which the Hood River splits.

The Hood River breaks into white foam at the Wilberforce Hills before taking the plunge around the rock island.

The Hood River near Arctic Sound, site of Franklin's first camp

"The Loon and the Fish" by Kananginak

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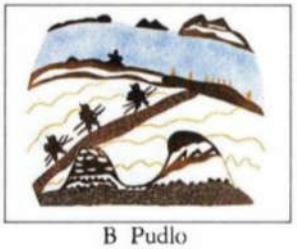

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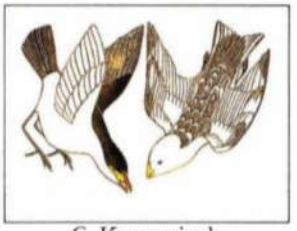

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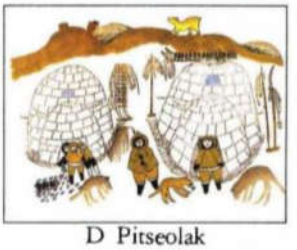

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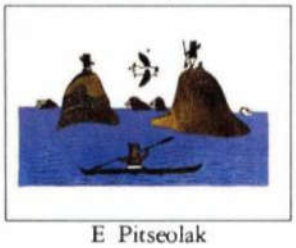

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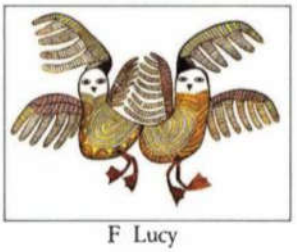

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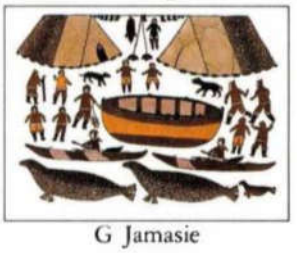

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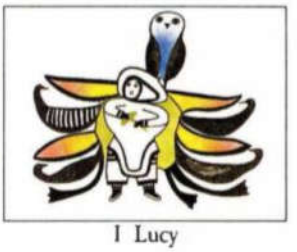

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A lone caribou grazes above the Wilberforce Falls, with the vast tundra behind him.

Less than three hours hiking brought us to one of the wonders of the Canadian North. First we saw the spume rising about the dark edges of the canyon, and heard the rumble, then the roar of tens of thousands of gallons of water hurtling over two precipices.

We stood on the left (west) bank and stared, and tried to reconcile the scene with the combined drawings of Midshipmen Back and Hood. A great pillar had crumpled, and the artists had taken certain liberties, but there it was — clear, green water thundering into a narrow canyon a hundred feet below. Like Franklin, we could not judge the height of the lower falls . . . 'at least one hundred [feet], but perhaps considerably more, for the narrowness of the chasm into which it fell prevented us from seeing its bottom, and we could merely discern the top of the spray far beneath our feet'.

A thin arm of water encircled a high narrow island. Fortunately, this anabranch had shrunken to a series of ponds in the smooth light red sandstone, very enticing. The water-scoured rock descended in big steps, and we were able to bestride the outflow, now only a trickle.

So we reached the island, and crossed it. Now we could view the upper falls, a sheer drop of 60 feet. Franklin estimated the fall accurately, calculating a drop of 250 feet from the brink of the falls to sea-level. It was obvious the party could not have run the turbulent canyon. They must portage, and from scouting above the falls, they decided their two big canoes would only be a nuisance. Accordingly, while the two midshipmen sketched, the canoemen cut down the big canoes to half-size, and the gentlemen sorted what they could leave behind. ('The stores, books &c., which were not absolutely necessary to be carried, were then put up in boxes to be left *en cache* here, in order that the men's burdens might be as light as possible.')

We sat on the island at the very brink, mesmerized by the plunging water. 'Wild' (completely untrammeled) rivers have an endless fascination.

'I wish it could stay like this forever', Sheila said. 'They'll probably turn it into electric power eventually.'

'More likely a national or territorial park, I hope. Or a National Heritage site like Virginia Falls on the Nahanni.'

We pitched our tent on a bit of level ground between boulders, and had a frugal dinner. There was no darkness at that latitude, 60 kilometres above the Arctic Circle.

The area around the falls forms favourite grazing grounds for muskoxen. We had counted 20 on our reconnaissance trip. Now we watched three on the opposite side, their antique shapes silhouetted in the low sun. Slowly they drifted over a mound and out of sight. We felt privileged. ♦

A Great Man Forgotten

By Duff Roblin

FREDERICK HAULTAIN
Frontier Statesman of the Canadian Northwest

By Grant MacEwan. Western Producer Prairie Books, Saskatoon, 1985. 192 pp. $12.95 paper.

Dr. Grant MacEwan's book about Sir Frederick Haultain is a valiant attempt to restore to memory the record of a worthy politician prominent in the early history of western Canada. The fact that the book fails to excite the imagination of this reader may reflect not so much on the author, nor, indeed, on the significance of the events described, so much as it does on the matter of fact record of the times.

It is a convention that the story of the settlement and the development of the Canadian West is rather prosaic and unexciting. It is a story somewhat short of the colour and romance, be it fiction or otherwise, of the American frontier or at least we have been taught to think of it in those terms. Indeed, there even seems to be a Canadian tendency to play down those events and those personalities that lent excitement to the scene. The principal Canadian actors come across as decent, honest folk who laboured consciously, if somewhat obscurely, to raise up the structure of province and of nation in the Northwest Territories. When one thinks of the comparative triumph of peace and order in our Canadian story, one could conclude that that may be no bad thing when one considers the alternative.

The book opens with some interesting sketches of pioneer life around Fort MacLeod, Alberta. I was posted to #7 Service Flying Training School at Fort MacLeod and spent twelve-odd months there at the beginning of World War II. I attended the same Christ Church where Haultain sang in the choir. It must have been a mighty small choir because it is a mighty small church. Nevertheless, some aura of Fort MacLeod's early days still hung around its river and the town. But nobody spoke to me about Haultain — a man who ought to have been a local hero. I had to read Dr. MacEwan's book to learn of the connection. So I am doubly appreciative of Dr. MacEwan's purpose in re-establishing Haultain's existence.

Haultain's main aim in politics was to secure full provincial status for the Northwest Territories. I have much sympathy with this ambition, but I can also understand the position of the federal authorities who, at least in the beginning, were putting up most of the money. There was a need to recognize the responsibility of the federal government to account to parliament for its expenditures in the Northwest Territories. After all, parliament supplied the cash. As the country grew it was inevitable that the shifting balance should come down on the side of provincial interests, but it is questionable to argue that the timing was seriously out of phase.

So too, I can understand Haultain's early preference for the non-partisan approach in Northwest Territory politics. It is clear, however, that non-partisanship is a will-

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Introduction by William E. Taylor Jr., President, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

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o'-the-wisp, though Haultain was not the last western political figure to seek it. Legislatures mean politics and politics mean parties. Indeed, representative and responsible parliamentary democracy means parties. The reality of this principle caught up with Haultain far too late as far as he personally was concerned. Indeed, it could even be argued that an earlier acceptance of party politics might have enabled him to advance to his goal more surely. Party politics can be as principled and lofty as any non-partisan combination.

But what cannot be forgiven is the petty party politics that left Haultain high and dry in 1905. Clearly, when the new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan were formed, Haultain had earned the right, by every standard, to be called by a Lieutenant-Governor to head the government of one or the other. The injustice of the treatment meted out to him by the partisans of the Laurier administration will strike the reader even today. His ill luck in the provincial election that followed reflected a failure to mobilize for the good purposes of party politics in good time.

But was Haultain such a dry and proper personality as Dr. MacEwan makes out? Could no more light be thrown on the nature of Haultain as a man? What compulsive urge drove him to become the virtual leader of a government in his early thirties? Could he really have been so lacking in ambition and so self-effacing as the book seems to say? Or was this part of his success? What were the relations between Haultain the leader and the legislators who followed him in the advisory council and in the legislature? What kind of a leader was he?

Again, is there anything more to be said or inferred about his two curious marriages, particularly the one which was apparently kept a secret for over thirty years? Maybe there is more romance in Haultain than MacEwan discovered. Then, after he left politics, Haultain sat on the Saskatchewan Bench for many long years. What kind of a judge was he? Were there judgements of significance or interest that would throw more light on the character of this unusual man? One is bound to speculate on the springs of action in human beings.

Incidentally, the book reports some apparently verbatim quotations for which it is hard to imagine any authority. And for those Manitobans who would like to know, the J. E. Pendergrass referred to in Chapter 10, was, in fact, J. E. Prendergast, a former Chief Justice of that province.

Over all, Dr. Grant MacEwan's book is good news. It is a good record of an important personality in the development of western Canada, one who is usually relegated to a footnote. The theme of a struggle for responsible government is thoroughly Canadian in the conduct of the struggle and the matter of the outcome. Frederick Haultain is as good as Joseph Howe any day. His leadership was sound and a place of honour in our history is due him. What if he comes across as a bit of a stuffed shirt. If true, it is surely no crippling defect. It may even be we have yet fully to grasp the real personality behind the record.

Senator The Hon. Duff Roblin, a former Premier of Manitoba, is Leader of the Government in the Canadian Senate.

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THE LAST BATTLE

By J.W. Anderson

THE BATTLE OF BATOCHE
British Small Warfare and the Entrenched Métis

By Walter Hildebrandt. National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, Environment Canada, Ottawa, 1985. 120 pp. $6.95 paper.

The North West Rebellion of 1885 pitted Métis settlers against the Canadian Government in a short-lived insurrection in which the deranged Métis leader Louis Riel attempted to win rights for his people from a distant and insensitive government.

It was Riel himself who decided to make a stand at Batoche, a thriving Métis town, on a bend in the South Saskatchewan River. He earnestly believed Batoche would become the centre of a new Catholicism. Right to the end Riel steadfastly held that divine intervention would save the Métis at Batoche. But it was not to be; the Métis were defeated a hundred years ago last May, the tragic, misguided leader Riel was hanged in Regina as a traitor several months later.

At this distance it all seems a dreadful mistake. The Métis under Riel and his 'Commanding General' Gabriel Dumont never really had much of a chance against the militia forces led by Major-General Frederick Middleton. Between 9 and 12 May some 25 Canadians, whites, Indians and Métis, died at Batoche after 1,000 men fought in the largest and longest battle ever to take place on the Canadian prairies. History lives on a century later on the muddy banks of the South Saskatchewan River. We can see traces of it in the several museums subsequently erected and in the earth

Louis Riel

mounds, all that remain of the Métis rifle pits at Batoche where this year's centennial of the battle has been officially commemorated.

This timely book, profusely illustrated with old photographs and drawings, is a truly fascinating account of the battle. The text is clear and well written, with sufficient detail for the interested layman to get an excellent grasp of the vicissitudes of the four day battle. While the book deals chiefly with the battle itself, the author is mindful of placing the event into an historical perspective. If the various stages of the battle occupy centre stage, the preliminary causes, effects and the aftermath are briefly, if decently, dealt with.

It is the maligned tactics of Middleton that come under close scrutiny along with those of Riel and Dumont. Middleton, by all accounts a starchy British commander of considerable experience, managed to defeat the outnumbered Métis with little bloodshed. His tactics, as the author is at pains to explain, were a model of what was then called 'British Small Warfare.' It included the use of zaribas, basically a corral formed by wagons, reinforced by piled up supplies and often surrounded by earthworks and cut brush, which acted as a base for movements out against the enemy and a place to which soldiers could withdraw at the end of a day's fighting. The Métis themselves were not unacquainted with this type of protective corral.

A criticism of Middleton was his decided bias toward British officers to whom he gave most of the important responsibilities, in preference to Canadians. This fact alone has not endeared his memory. Facing Middleton and his rookie militia, 800 strong but untried in battle, was the guerilla leader Gabriel Dumont and 300 Métis and Indians. Dumont had wanted to harass the militia as it slowly moved into unfamiliar terrain. Wooded coulees and prairie copses made excellent cover from which to ambush a vulnerable army that normally clung to roads.

Dumont's guerilla tactics which had proved so successful at Fish Creek were not to be employed, however, for he deferred to Riel who had decided to entrench at Batoche. Dumont made the most of what must have appeared to him a hopeless situation. Even so, the Métis initially scored some successes, including the crippling of the armed supply ship *Northcote* by lowering a ferry wire across the river at the last moment, demasting it and putting it out of action.

The first advance to contact of Middleton's force was repulsed by the Métis from their concealed rifle pits. They maintained a murderous rifle fire with their repeater Winchesters.

The Métis made two attempts to encircle the Field Force on the first day in an effort to capture the sole Gatling gun, which Middleton had brought along with several nine pounder field guns, fire power quite unmatched on the Métis side.

The fortunes of battle went back and forth, but on the final day, 12 May, Middleton's troops carried out a feint on the right flank which confused the Métis and a full-scale advance then took place. Middleton was able to scatter the Métis who were much depleted in numbers, many having drifted away during the night.

This excellent short book is a necessary adjunct to a full understanding of the historical events that took place in Western Canada one hundred years ago.

Riel's assurance to his people of divine intervention came to nought. It seemed possible that Riel's hope for a negotiated settlement might have been achieved if the Métis position had been reinforced with a string of successful guerilla actions across the North West and had he not chosen Batoche as the place where the Métis were to make their stand.

J.W. Anderson studied under Sir Lewis Namier at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London. He teaches at the University of Western Ontario.

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